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Reality Check

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IS BRITAIN'S LOVE OF TEA OVER?

EVERYTHING STOPS FOR TEA is a humorous 1935 song that captured the notion that to the British, tea was not merely a drink but a national institution. It **soothed**¹ **frazzled**² nerves, **punctuated**³ working days and was the **go-to**⁴ solution in any crisis. Lost your job? Had an accident? Husband left you? **I'll get the kettle on**⁵!

At tea's peak in the late 20th century, Britain was estimated to have been drinking around 165 million cups of tea every day – equivalent to roughly 60 billion cups a year. Fast forward to today, and Britain's beloved **cuppa**⁶ appears to be facing an **identity crisis**⁷.

Recent surveys suggest that younger adults are increasingly **swapping traditional tea for lattes**⁸, flat whites and colourful matcha creations. For many Generation Zs, drinking tea with a **digestive biscuit**⁹ in the afternoon is something they associate with their grandparents and could hardly be considered cool or **social-media-post-worthy**¹⁰.

Coffee's rise has been impossible to ignore. Over the past two decades, stylish coffee shops have transformed **high streets**¹¹, offering endless variations of beans, milk alternatives and flavoured syrups. Ordering a coffee has become an exercise in **personal branding**¹². Tea, meanwhile, remains **stubbornly**¹³ straightforward. Few people **boast about**¹⁴ their **artisan**¹⁵ breakfast blend with oat milk and a **dash of cinnamon**¹⁶.

Then there is matcha, the **vibrant**¹⁷ green **powdered**¹⁸ tea that has become something of a social media **darling**¹⁹. **Packed with antioxidants**²⁰ and often served in trendy glasses, it appeals to younger consumers who are as interested in appearance as flavour. A traditional mug of black tea seems rather **dull**²¹ in comparison.

The workplace has changed, too. The classic office **tea round**²², where a 'tea lady'²³ once wheeled her **trolley**²⁴, or a thoughtful colleague disappeared to the kitchen to return with a tray of tea while asking, 'Two sugars?' has become less common in an era of **hybrid working**²⁵. Many employees now prepare drinks at home, where sophisticated coffee machines often **take pride of place**²⁶ on the kitchen counter.

But **let's not get things out of proportion**²⁷. Britain still consumes enormous quantities of tea – **in the region of**²⁸ 100 million cups a day – remaining ahead of coffee as the most popular **hot beverage**²⁹.

While non-British hosts might need reminding not to forget the milk, the tea industry is adapting to different tastes and ways of drinking the **sacred**³⁰ **brew**³¹. Manufacturers are introducing premium **loose-leaf**³² varieties, fruit **infusions**³³ and wellness blends aimed at **health-conscious**³⁴ consumers. **Cold-brew**³⁵ teas and **sparkling**³⁶ tea drinks are attempting to modernise the category without **abandoning**³⁷ its **heritage**³⁸. Tea is learning a few new tricks of its own rather than heading to the old people's beverage **retirement home**³⁹.

Coffee has successfully **reinvented itself**⁴⁰ as an experience, while tea has largely

w Wielkiej Brytanii)

¹⁰ X-worthy eks 'wɜ:ði warty X

¹¹ high street hai stri:t główna ulica handlowa

¹² personal branding 'pɜ:sənl 'brændɪŋ

budowanie wizerunku osobistego

¹³ stubbornly 'stʌbənlɪ uparcie, nieustępliwie

¹⁴ to boast about sth tə bəʊst ə'baʊt 'sʌmθɪŋ

chwalić się czymś

¹⁵ artisan 'ɑ:tɪzæn tu: rzemieślnicz, wytwarzany tradycyjnie

¹⁶ a dash of sth ə dæʃ ɒv 'sʌmθɪŋ odrobina

czegoś

¹⁷ vibrant 'vaɪbrənt żywy, intensywny

(o kolorze)

¹⁸ powdered 'paʊdəd sproszkowany

¹⁹ darling 'dɑ:lɪŋ tu: ulubieniec, faworyt

²⁰ packed with sth pækt wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ

naładowany czymś, pełen czegoś

²¹ dull dʌl nijaki, nudny

²² tea round ti: raʊnd runda herbaty

(przygotowywanie herbaty dla wszystkich w biurze)

²³ tea lady ti: 'leɪdi osoba odpowiedzialna za

serwis kawowy

²⁴ trolley 'trɒli wózek (do serwowania

napojów, przekąsek)

²⁵ hybrid working 'haɪbrɪd 'wɜ:kɪŋ praca

hybrydowa

²⁶ to take pride of place tə teɪk praɪd ɒv pleɪs

zajmować honorowe miejsce

²⁷ to get things out of proportion tə get θɪŋz

əʊt ɒv prə'pɔ:ʃn wyolbrzymiać sprawy, tracić

poczucie proporcji

²⁸ in the region of ɪn ðə 'ri:dʒən ɒv

w granicach, około

²⁹ hot beverage hɒt 'bevərɪdʒ gorący napój

³⁰ sacred 'seɪkrɪd święty

³¹ brew bru: tu: napar, napój (zwłaszcza

herbata lub kawa)

³² loose-leaf lu:s li:f liściasta (o herbacie)

³³ infusion ɪn'fju:ʒn napar, herbata ziołowa

³⁴ health-conscious helθ 'kɒnfəs dbający

o zdrowie, świadomy zdrowotnie

³⁵ cold-brew kəʊld bru: parzony na zimno

(o herbacie lub kawie)

³⁶ sparkling 'spɔ:klɪŋ gazowany, musujący

³⁷ to abandon sth tə ə'bændən 'sʌmθɪŋ

porzucać coś

³⁸ heritage 'herɪtɪdʒ dziedzictwo, tradycja

³⁹ retirement home rɪ'taɪəmənt həʊm dom

spokojnej starości

⁴⁰ to reinvent oneself tə ,ri:ɪn'vent wʌn'self

zbudować, zdefiniować siebie na nowo

¹ to soothe sth tə su:ð 'sʌmθɪŋ łagodzić, koić coś

² frazzled 'fræzld roztrzęsiony, wyczerpany

nerwowo

³ to punctuate sth tə 'pʌŋktʃueɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:

przerywać coś, dzielić coś na części

⁴ go-to 'gəʊ tu: sprawdzony, pierwszego wyboru

⁵ to get the kettle on tə get ðə 'ketl ɒn

nastawić czajnik (na herbatę)

⁶ cuppa 'kʌpə pot. filiżanka herbaty

⁷ identity crisis aɪ'dentəti 'kraɪsɪs kryzys

tożsamości

⁸ to swap sth for sth tə swɒp 'sʌmθɪŋ fə

'sʌmθɪŋ zamieniać coś na coś

⁹ digestive biscuit daɪ'dʒestɪv 'bɪskɪt herbatnik

pełnoziarnisty (popularne ciastko



relied on⁴¹ nostalgia. Yet trends have a habit of coming full circle⁴². Vinyl records⁴³ have returned. Film cameras are fashionable again. Even knitted jumpers⁴⁴ have enjoyed unexpected moments in the spotlight⁴⁵. There is every chance that the humble⁴⁶ teapot⁴⁷ will have its own revival⁴⁸. Although most tea now comes in teabags⁴⁹, perhaps even loose-leaf tea may once again have its moment as a trendy product.

So, is Britain's love affair⁵⁰ with tea really over? Probably not. It may simply be taking a short coffee break before returning to what it really loves best. Shall I get the kettle on? I could murder a cup of tea⁵¹!

- ⁴¹ to rely on sth *tə ri'laɪ ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ* polegać na czymś
- ⁴² to come full circle *tə kʌm fʊl 'sɜːkl* zataczać koło, wracać do punktu wyjścia
- ⁴³ vinyl record *'vaɪnl 'rekɔːd* płyta winylowa
- ⁴⁴ knitted jumper *'nɪtɪd 'dʒʌmpə* dzianinowy sweter
- ⁴⁵ to enjoy a moment in the spotlight *tʊ ɪn'dʒɔɪ ə 'mɒmənt ɪn ðə 'spɒtlaɪt* cieszyć się chwilą popularności, być w centrum uwagi
- ⁴⁶ humble *'hʌmbl* skromny, niepozorny
- ⁴⁷ teapot *'tiːpɒt* czajniczek do herbaty, dzbanek do parzenia herbaty
- ⁴⁸ revival *rɪ'vaɪvl* odrodzenie, powrót do łask
- ⁴⁹ teabag *'tiːbæg* torebka herbaty
- ⁵⁰ love affair *lʌv ə'feə* tu: romans, głęboka fascynacja

- ⁵¹ I could murder a cup of tea *aɪ kʊd 'mɜːdə ə kʌp ɒv tiː* **pot.** bardzo chciałbym/chciałabym napić się herbaty

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

frazzled
/'fræzld/
roztrzęsiony,
wyczerpany nerwowo

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WHEN WOMEN STOOD BETWEEN FASHION AND EXTINCTION¹

IN THE DRAWING ROOM² of a Manchester house in 1889, Emily Williamson invited her neighbours to tea and asked them to sign a **pledge**³ never to wear bird feathers in their hats again.

A Trade Built on Beauty

The context for Williamson's quiet **act of defiance**⁴ was **staggering**⁵ in its violence. Late Victorian fashion demanded exotic **plumage**⁶ – **egret**⁷ feathers, **birds of paradise**⁸, even entire **hummingbirds**⁹ – **sewn**¹⁰ onto hats as symbols of wealth and taste. London **auction houses**¹¹ **shifted**¹² five million bird **skins**¹³ **annually**¹⁴. In the Florida Everglades, egret populations **collapsed**¹⁵ as hunters shot **breeding adults**¹⁶ during **nesting season**¹⁷, when their delicate **aigrettes**¹⁸ were most spectacular, leaving **chicks**¹⁹ to **starve**²⁰ in their thousands. The **millinery**²¹ trade was, quite **literally**²², built on nests of bones.

What made the **carnage**²³ particularly **galling** to²⁴ Williamson and her circle was the **deafening**²⁵ institutional silence. The male-dominated British **Ornithologists**²⁶ Union, founded in 1858, had spent three decades **meticulously**²⁷ cataloguing **species**²⁸ while remaining **studiously**²⁹ silent on the commercial **slaughter**³⁰ **driving** many of them **towards**³¹ **oblivion**³². Women could observe birds, sketch them, even **fund**³³ **expeditions**³⁴ – but they could not join the BOU, and their concerns about conservation were **dismissed**³⁵ as **sentimental**³⁶.

So Williamson, a **well-connected**³⁷ Manchester woman with a talent for organising, decided to **bypass**³⁸ the ornithologists entirely. The Society for the Protection of Birds, **launched**³⁹ in her home, was **unapologetically**⁴⁰ **populist**⁴¹. Members signed a simple pledge to

'discourage⁴² the **wanton**⁴³ destruction of birds and **refrain from**⁴⁴ wearing feathers. Within a year, Eliza Phillips founded a parallel group in London; by 1891, they had merged. The **membership**⁴⁵ was **exclusively**⁴⁶ female, and it grew with remarkable speed.

¹ extinction ɪks'tɪŋkʃən wyginięcie, wymarcie

² drawing room 'drɔ:ɪŋ ru:m salon

³ pledge pledʒ uroczyste zobowiązanie, przyrzeczenie

⁴ act of defiance ækt ɒv dɪ'faɪəns akt sprzeciwu, buntu

⁵ staggering 'stæɡərɪŋ oszałamiający, przerażający

⁶ plumage 'plu:mɪdʒ upierzenie

⁷ egret 'i:ɡrət czapla biała

⁸ bird of paradise bɜ:d ɒv 'pærədəɪs rajski ptak

⁹ hummingbird 'hʌmɪŋbɜ:d koliber

¹⁰ sewn sɔ:n przyszyty

¹¹ auction house 'ɔ:kʃən haʊs dom aukcyjny

¹² to shift tə ʃɪft tu: sprzedawać, przenosić (duże ilości towaru)

¹³ skin skɪn tu: skóra z ptasimi piórami

¹⁴ annually 'ænjʊəli rocznie

¹⁵ to collapse tə kə'læps załamać się, spaść dramatycznie

¹⁶ breeding adult 'bri:dlɪŋ 'ædʌlt dorosły osobnik w okresie lęgowym

¹⁷ nesting season 'nestɪŋ 'si:zən sezon lęgowy

¹⁸ egret 'eɪɡrət tu: długie pióra ozdobne (zwłaszcza czapli)

¹⁹ chick tʃɪk piskle

²⁰ to starve tə stɑ:v umrzeć z głodu

²¹ millinery 'mɪlnəri tu: kapelusznictwo, moda związana z kapelusami

²² literally 'lɪtərəli dosłownie

²³ carnage 'kɑ:nɪdʒ rzeź, masakra

²⁴ galling to sb 'ɡɔ:lɪŋ tə 'sʌmbədi irytujący, szczególnie bolesny dla kogoś

²⁵ deafening 'defənɪŋ tu: ogłuszający (milczeniem, brakiem odzewu), przytłaczający

²⁶ ornithologist ɔ:ni'thɒlədʒɪst ornitolog

²⁷ meticulously mə'tɪkjələsli drobiazgowo, skrupulatnie

²⁸ species 'spi:ʃi:z gatunek, gatunki

²⁹ studiously 'stju:diəsli tu: celowo, świadomie

³⁰ slaughter 'slɔ:tə rzeź, ubój

Emily Williamson



³¹ to drive sth towards sth tə draɪv 'sʌmθɪŋ tə'wɔ:dz 'sʌmθɪŋ doprowadzać do czegoś

³² oblivion ə'blɪvɪən zapomnienie, nicność

³³ to fund tə fʌnd finansować

³⁴ expedition ˌekspe'dɪʃən wyprawa (naukowa, badawcza)

³⁵ dismissed dɪs'mɪst tu: odrzucany, lekceważony, nietraktowany poważnie

³⁶ sentimental ˌsenti'menti sentymentalny, uczuciowy

³⁷ well-connected ˌwel kə'nektɪd mający dobre układy/kontakty, ustosunkowany

³⁸ to bypass sb tə 'baɪpɑ:s 'sʌmbədi p/ominąć kogoś

³⁹ launched ˌlɔ:ntʃt zapoczątkowany

⁴⁰ unapologetically ˌʌnəˌpɒlə'dʒetɪkli bez przeprosin, otwarcie

⁴¹ populist ˌpɒpjəlɪst populistyczny, skierowany do ludzi

⁴² to discourage sth tə dɪs'kʌrɪdʒ 'sʌmθɪŋ zniechęcić do czegoś

⁴³ wanton 'wɒntən bezsensowny, bezcelowy

⁴⁴ to refrain from sth tə rɪ'freɪn frɒm 'sʌmθɪŋ powstrzymywać się od czegoś

⁴⁵ membership ˌmembəʃɪp członkostwo, liczba członków

⁴⁶ exclusively ɪk'sklu:svli wyłącznie

From Drawing Rooms to Parliament

By 1898, the Society had **recruited**⁴⁷ 20,000 members – a movement large enough that politicians could no longer ignore it. The campaign strategy was ingenious: combine **moral suasion**⁴⁸ with **hard economics**⁴⁹. Activists **distributed**⁵⁰ **leaflets**⁵¹ outside milliners' shops, published **gruesome**⁵² photographs of **plume-hunting**⁵³ operations, and **lobbied**⁵⁴ **MPs**⁵⁵ with detailed evidence of **species decline**⁵⁶. Etta Lemon, who became the Society's long-serving secretary, proved particularly **adept at**⁵⁷ navigating Westminster's **corridors**⁵⁸, building alliances with **sympathetic**⁵⁹ **parliamentarians**⁶⁰ who introduced **bill after bill**⁶¹. The **breakthrough**⁶² came in 1921 with the Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act, which banned the import of most exotic feathers into Britain. It was the Society's first **legislative victory**⁶³, and it arrived after three decades of **patient**⁶⁴, meticulous campaigning. The Act did not end the global plume trade – American and French markets remained open – but it demonstrated that organised citizen pressure could **reshape**⁶⁵ commercial practice. Fashion, which had seemed an **immutable**⁶⁶ force, proved **vulnerable to**⁶⁷ **moral argument**⁶⁸ backed by **political will**⁶⁹. By then, the Society had already secured **royal patronage**⁷⁰. In 1904, King Edward VII granted a **Royal Charter**⁷¹, transforming the SPB into the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The movement had grown so **influential**⁷² that, by 1905, it had transitioned from **drawing-room rebellion**⁷³ to national institution. The irony was **delicious**⁷⁴: an organisation founded because women **were excluded from**⁷⁵ ornithological circles had become more powerful than the body that had **shut them out**⁷⁶.

The Logic of Land

Legislation was one thing; **habitat**⁷⁷ was another. The RSPB came to understand that protecting birds required protecting

the landscapes they inhabited, a realisation that led, in 1930, to the purchase of its first **nature reserve**⁷⁸. This marked a **strategic evolution**⁷⁹: from campaigning against harm to actively creating

- ⁴⁷ to recruit sb *tə rɪ'krʊt 'sʌmbədi tu:*
pozyskać członków, zrekrutować kogoś
- ⁴⁸ moral suasion *'mɒrəl swerʒən perswazja*
moralna, odwoływanie się do sumienia
- ⁴⁹ hard economics *hɑ:d ,ekə'nɒmiks* twarde argumenty ekonomiczne
- ⁵⁰ to distribute sth *tə dɪs'trɪbjʊt 'sʌmθɪŋ*
dystrybuować, rozprowadzać coś
- ⁵¹ leaflet *'li:flet* ulotka
- ⁵² gruesome *'gru:səm* makabryczny, okropny
- ⁵³ plume-hunting *plu:m 'hʌntɪŋ* polowanie na ptaki dla piór
- ⁵⁴ to lobby sb *tə 'lɒbi 'sʌmbədi* wywierać na kogoś nacisk
- ⁵⁵ MP (Member of Parliament) *em pi:, 'membə ɒv 'pɑ:ləmənt* poseł do parlamentu brytyjskiego
- ⁵⁶ species decline *'spi:ʃi:z dɪ'klaɪn* spadek liczebności gatunku
- ⁵⁷ adept at sth *ə'dept ət 'sʌmθɪŋ* biegły w czymś, sprawny w czymś
- ⁵⁸ corridor *'kɒrɪdɔ:* *tu:* kuluary (władzy)
- ⁵⁹ sympathetic *,sɪmpə'tetɪk tu:* przychylny, życzliwy
- ⁶⁰ parliamentarian *,pɑ:ləmənt'teəriən* parlamentarzysta
- ⁶¹ bill after bill *bɪl 'ɑ:ftə bɪl* projekt ustawy za projektem ustawy
- ⁶² breakthrough *'breɪkθru:* przełom
- ⁶³ legislative victory *'ledʒɪslətɪv 'vɪktəri* zwycięstwo legislacyjne, sukces w uchwaleniu prawa
- ⁶⁴ patient *'peɪʃənt* cierpliwy, wytrwały
- ⁶⁵ to reshape sth *tə ,ri:'ʃeɪp 'sʌmθɪŋ* przekształcić coś
- ⁶⁶ immutable *ɪ'mju:təbl* niezmienny, nienaruszalny
- ⁶⁷ vulnerable to sth *'vʌlnərəbl tə 'sʌmθɪŋ* podatny na coś, wrażliwy na coś
- ⁶⁸ moral argument *'mɒrəl 'ɑ:gjəmənt* argument moralny
- ⁶⁹ political will *pə'lɪtɪkəl wɪl* wola polityczna
- ⁷⁰ royal patronage *'rɔɪəl 'pætrənɪdʒ* królewski patronat
- ⁷¹ Royal Charter *'rɔɪəl 'tʃɑ:tə* karta królewska (dokument nadający instytucji status prawny)



- ⁷² influential *,ɪnflu'entʃəl* wpływowy
- ⁷³ drawing-room rebellion *'drɔ:ɪŋ ru:m rɪ'beljən*
bunt salonowy
- ⁷⁴ delicious *dɪ'lɪʃəs tu:* rozkoszny, satysfakcjonujący
- ⁷⁵ to be excluded from sth *tə bi: ɪks'klu:dɪd frəm 'sʌmθɪŋ* zostać, być z czegoś wykluczonym
- ⁷⁶ to shut sb out *tə ʃʌt 'sʌmbədi aʊt* wykluczyć kogoś, nie dopuścić kogoś do czegoś
- ⁷⁷ habitat *'hæbɪtæt* siedlisko, środowisko naturalne
- ⁷⁸ nature reserve *'neɪtʃə rɪ'zɜ:v* rezerwat przyrody
- ⁷⁹ strategic evolution *stre'tɪ:dʒɪk ,i:və'lu:ʃən* ewolucja strategiczna



THE RSPB IN NUMBERS (2025-26)

- Revenue: GBP 190.5 million
- Full-time staff¹: 2,452 average employees
- Active volunteers²: 12,500+
- Membership: 1.1 million+
- Nature reserves: 225+ sites

¹ full-time staff *,fɒl taɪm sta:f*
pracownicy pełnoetatowi

² active volunteer *'æktɪv ,vɒləntɪə*
aktywny wolontariusz

INFOBOX

refuges⁸⁰. Over the following decades, the reserve network⁸¹ expanded⁸² steadily, driven by a pragmatic recognition that Britain's accelerating development – urbanisation, intensive agriculture⁸³, infrastructure⁸⁴ – was eliminating the places birds needed to survive.

That logic now underpins⁸⁵ an estate⁸⁶ of more than 220 sites covering an area larger than Greater London. The latest acquisition⁸⁷, completed in 2025, brought the final parcel of land⁸⁸ at Geltsdale in Cumbria into RSPB ownership, making it the largest reserve in England. Described by the organisation as 'one of the most significant land purchases in our history', Geltsdale represents the full realisation of the founders' vision: a permanent, protected space where birds can breed⁸⁹, feed⁹⁰ and migrate without human interference. It is conservation not as protest, but as possession⁹¹.

Yet ownership brings its own challenges. Managing such an extensive⁹² network requires substantial⁹³ resources – staff, volunteers, equipment, expertise⁹⁴. The RSPB's 2022 revenue⁹⁵ exceeded⁹⁶ GBP 157 million, funding the work of 2,231 employees and 10,500 volunteers. That scale brings bureaucratic complexity⁹⁷ and financial vulnerability⁹⁸. Recent increases in employer National Insurance contributions⁹⁹ have added roughly GBP 2 million to the annual wage bill¹⁰⁰, prompting¹⁰¹ an operational review¹⁰² in 2024. Global financial pressures, it turns out, constrain even organisations founded on moral principle.

Citizen Science¹⁰³ at Scale

If land ownership represents one strand¹⁰⁴ of the RSPB's modern identity, mass participation¹⁰⁵ represents another. The Big

Garden Birdwatch, now in its 47th year, epitomises¹⁰⁶ this approach. In 2026, more than 650,000 participants spent an hour counting birds in their gardens, recording 9.4 million individual sightings¹⁰⁷. The data gathered – species, location, numbers – feeds into¹⁰⁸ long-term trend analysis¹⁰⁹, helping scientists track population shifts¹¹⁰ with a granularity¹¹¹ no professional survey¹¹² could match.

⁸⁴ infrastructure 'ɪnfəstrʌktʃə infrastruktura

⁸⁵ to underpin tʊ ˌʌndəˈpɪn stanowić podstawę, wspierać

⁸⁶ estate ɪˈsteɪt tu: majątek ziemski, sieć posiadłości

⁸⁷ acquisition ˌækwiˈzɪʃən nabycie, przejęcie

⁸⁸ parcel of land ˈpɑːsəl ɒv lænd działka, parcela ziemi

⁸⁹ to breed tə brɪd rozmnażać się, lęgnąć się

⁹⁰ to feed tə fiːd żywić się, żerować

⁹¹ possession pəˈzeʃən tu: posiadanie (jako forma kontroli)

⁹² extensive ɪkˈstensɪv rozległy, obszerny

⁹³ substantial səbˈstænʃəl pokaźny, spory

⁹⁴ expertise ˌekspɜːˈtiːz ekspertyza, fachowa wiedza

⁹⁵ revenue ˈrevɛnjuː przychody

⁹⁶ to exceed tʊ ɪkˈsiːd przekroczyć

⁹⁷ complexity kəmˈpleksəti złożoność

⁹⁸ financial vulnerability faɪˈnænsjəl ˌvʌlnərəˈbɪləti wrażliwość finansowa, podatność na problemy finansowe

⁹⁹ employer National Insurance contributions ɪmˈplɔɪə ˈnæʃənəl ɪnˈʃʊərəns ˌkɒntrɪˈbjʊːʃənz składki pracodawcy na ubezpieczenie społeczne

¹⁰⁰ wage bill weɪdʒ bɪl koszty płac

¹⁰¹ to prompt sth tə prɒmpt ˈsʌmθɪŋ skłonić do czegoś

¹⁰² operational review ˌɒpəˈreɪʃənəl rɪˈvjuː przegląd działalności operacyjnej

¹⁰³ citizen science ˈsɪtɪzən ˈsaɪəns nauka obywatelska (badania naukowe z udziałem amatorów)

¹⁰⁴ strand strænd tu: nurt, wątek

¹⁰⁵ mass participation mæs pɑːˈtɪsɪˈpeɪʃən masowy udział

¹⁰⁶ to epitomise sth tʊ ɪˈpɪtəmaɪz ˈsʌmθɪŋ



MILESTONES THAT MATTERED

- 1889: Emily Williamson founds the Society for the Protection of Birds in Manchester
- 1898: Membership reaches 20,000
- 1904: Royal Charter granted; organisation becomes the RSPB
- 1921: Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act passed – first legislative victory
- 1930: Purchase of first nature reserve
- 2025: Geltsdale completion creates largest English RSPB reserve

INFOBOX

uosabiać, być kwintesencją czegoś

¹⁰⁷ sighting ˈsaɪtɪŋ obserwacja (ptaka, zwierzęcia)

¹⁰⁸ to feed into sth tə fiːd ɪntə ˈsʌmθɪŋ wpływać na coś, dostarczać danych do czegoś

¹⁰⁹ long-term trend analysis lɒŋ tɜːm trend əˈnæləsɪs długoterminowa analiza trendów

¹¹⁰ population shift ˌpɒpjəˈleɪʃən ʃɪft zmiana w populacji

¹¹¹ granularity ˌgræn.jəˈlær.ə.ti szczegółowość, dokładność

¹¹² survey ˈsɜːveɪ tu: badanie terenowe, obserwacja

⁸⁰ refuge ˈrefjuːdʒ schronienie, azyl

⁸¹ the reserve network ðə rɪˈzɜːv ˈnetwɜːk sieć obszarów chronionych, sieć rezerwatów

⁸² to expand tʊ ɪksˈpænd poszerzać się, powiększać się

⁸³ intensive agriculture ɪnˈtensɪv ˌæɡrɪkʌltʃə intensywne rolnictwo

LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE AGES

The RSPB's current leadership includes Dr Amir Khan as President, Sir Andrew Cahn as **Chairman**¹, and Beccy Speight as **Chief Executive**². The Society's transformation from an **all-female**³ **pressure group**⁴ into a nationally recognised institution capable of **influencing**⁵ **legislation**⁶ and **shaping**⁷ conservation policy across Britain was symbolised by its securing of royal patronage and the steady growth of its membership and influence in the early 20th century.

¹ **Chairman** 'tʃeəməŋ **przewodniczący (zarządu)**

² **Chief Executive** tʃi:f iɡ'zekjətɪv **dyrektor generalny**

³ **all-female** ɔ:l 'fi:meɪl **wyłącznie kobiety**

⁴ **pressure group** 'preʃə gru:p **grupa nacisku**

⁵ **to influence sth** tə 'ɪnfluəns 'sʌmθɪŋ **wpływać na coś**

⁶ **legislation** ,ledʒɪs'leɪʃən **prawodawstwo**

⁷ **to shape sth** tə ʃeɪp 'sʌmθɪŋ **kształtować coś**

INFOBOX

This is citizen science on an extraordinary scale, and it reflects a fundamental belief that conservation cannot be the **preserve**¹¹³ of experts. The RSPB's membership, now exceeding 1.2 million, represents roughly one in fifty UK **households**¹¹⁴. That **reach**¹¹⁵ gives the organisation **political heft**¹¹⁶ – MPs listen when a million voters care about an issue – but it also creates a vast, distributed network of **observers**¹¹⁷. When a species declines, RSPB members notice. When a development threatens habitat, they **mobilise**¹¹⁸. The model pioneered in Emily Williamson's drawing room – ordinary people acting collectively – remains the organisation's **engine**¹¹⁹.

It is tempting to view the RSPB's history as a **triumph**¹²⁰, and in many respects¹²¹ it is. Species that **teetered**¹²² **on the brink**¹²³ – the **avocet**¹²⁴, the **bittern**¹²⁵, the **red kite**¹²⁶ – have been **pulled back**¹²⁷. Legislation that once seemed impossible is now **embedded in statute**¹²⁸. Yet British bird populations continue to decline **overall**¹²⁹, driven by forces the RSPB cannot fully control: **climate change**¹³⁰, industrial agriculture, **habitat fragmentation**¹³¹. The work that began in 1889 is not finished. Perhaps it never will be.

The Unfinished Campaign

What **endures**¹³² from the RSPB's founding moment is not just the specific victories – the banned plumes, the protected reserves – but the **underlying principle**¹³³: that citizens, organised and determined, can **hold economic and political power to account**¹³⁴. Williamson and her colleagues did not wait for permission. They did not **defer to**¹³⁵ expertise. They identified an **injustice**¹³⁶, built a movement, and refused to accept that fashion's demand for beauty justified **ecological destruction**¹³⁷. That **clarity of purpose**¹³⁸ remains the RSPB's greatest **asset**¹³⁹. In an era when environmental challenges feel **overwhelming**¹⁴⁰ and **systemic**¹⁴¹, the organisation offers something rare: a model of effective, **sustained action**¹⁴². The woman who invited her neighbours to tea in 1889 could not have imagined nature reserves the size of cities or citizen science projects involving hundreds of thousands. But she would recognise the essential work: people choosing to care, and acting on that care with patience, **rigour**¹⁴³ and an **unfashionable**¹⁴⁴ belief that the world can be made better.

¹¹³ **preserve** pri:'z:v **tu: domena, wyłączność**

¹¹⁴ **household** 'haʊshəʊld **gospodarstwo domowe**

¹¹⁵ **reach** ri:tʃ **tu: zasięg, siła oddziaływania**

¹¹⁶ **political heft** pə'litɪkəl heft **ciężar polityczny, wpływy**

¹¹⁷ **observer** əb'zɜ:və **obserwator**



¹¹⁸ **to mobilise** tə 'məʊbəlaɪz **zmobilizować się, zadziałać**

¹¹⁹ **engine** 'endʒɪn **tu: motor, siła napędowa**

¹²⁰ **triumph** 'traɪəmf **triumf**

¹²¹ **in many respects** ɪn 'meni ri'spekts **pod wieloma względami**

¹²² **to teeter** tə 'ti:tə **balansować, chwiać się**

¹²³ **on the brink (of extinction)** ɒn ðə brɪŋk ɒv ɪks'tɪŋkʃən **na skraju (zagłady, wyginiecia)**

¹²⁴ **avocet** 'ævəset **szablodziób (ptak brodzący)**

¹²⁵ **bittern** 'bɪtən **bąk (ptak z rodziny czaplowatych)**

¹²⁶ **red kite** red kaɪt **kania ruda**

¹²⁷ **pulled back** pʊld bæk **tu: uratowany przed wyginieciem**

¹²⁸ **embedded in statute** ɪm'bedɪd ɪn 'stætʃu:t **utrwalony w prawie, zapisany w ustawach**

¹²⁹ **overall** ,əʊvə'l **ogólnie, całościowo**

¹³⁰ **climate change** 'klaɪmət tʃeɪndʒ **zmiana klimatu**

¹³¹ **habitat fragmentation** 'hæbɪtæt ,fræɡmənt'eɪʃən **fragmentacja siedlisk**

¹³² **to endure** tə ɪn'dʒə **przetrwąć, pozostać**

¹³³ **underlying principle** ,ʌndə'laɪɪŋ 'prɪnsəpl **podstawowa zasada**

¹³⁴ **to hold sb to account** tə həʊld 'sʌmbədi tə ə'kaʊnt **rozliczyć kogoś, pociągnąć kogoś do odpowiedzialności**

¹³⁵ **to defer to sb** tə dɪ'fɜ: tə 'sʌmbədi **ulegać komuś, poddawać się czyjejs opinii**

¹³⁶ **injustice** ɪn'dʒʌstɪs **niesprawiedliwość**

¹³⁷ **ecological destruction** ,i:kə'lɒdʒɪkəl dɪ'strʌkʃən **niszczenie przyrody, tu też: zabijanie ptaków**

¹³⁸ **clarity of purpose** 'klaɪəti ɒv 'pɜ:pəs **jasność celu**

¹³⁹ **asset** 'æset **tu: atut, wartość**

¹⁴⁰ **overwhelming** ,əʊvə'welɪŋ **przytłaczający**

¹⁴¹ **systemic** sɪ'stemɪk **systemowy**

¹⁴² **sustained action** sə'steɪnd 'ækʃən **działanie długofalowe, konsekwentne**

¹⁴³ **rigour** 'rɪɡə **rygor, dyscyplina**

¹⁴⁴ **unfashionable** ʌn'fæʃənəbl **niemodny, niesztympowy**

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Industrial Revolutions

- First Revolution (~1760-1840):
Centred on¹ steam power, coal and mechanised textiles² in Great Britain.
- Second Revolution (~1870-1914):
Fuelled by³ electricity, internal combustion engines⁴, steel and mass production lines⁵.
- Third Revolution (~1947-2000s):
Driven by⁶ digital technology, computers, semiconductors⁷ and the rise of the internet.

¹ to centre on sth *tə 'sentə on 'sʌmθɪŋ*
koncentrować się na czymś

² textile *'tekstaɪl* tkanina,
włókiennictwo

³ to be fuelled by sth *tə bi 'fju:əld baɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ*
być napędzanym przez coś

⁴ internal combustion engine *ɪn,tɜ:nəl kəm'bastʃən 'endʒɪn*
silnik spalinowy

⁵ mass production line *mæs prə'dakʃən laɪn*
linia produkcji masowej

⁶ to be driven by sth *tə bi 'drɪvən baɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ*
być napędzanym przez coś

⁷ semiconductor *'semɪkən'dʌktə*
półprzewodnik

INFOBOX

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

habitat
/'hæbrɪtæt/
siedlisko

Could Degrowth¹ Save the Planet?

For more than two centuries, economic success has been measured by a remarkably simple idea: produce more than last year. Now, some people are questioning whether that is best *in the long run*² – the **BEM Team** investigates why.

The First Industrial Revolution (see *Industrial Revolutions Fact Box*) fundamentally changed the relationship between economies and growth. Before the late 18th century, economies expanded slowly and *were largely constrained by*³ agriculture, *manual labour*⁴ and limited transport. The invention of *steam power*⁵, *mechanised*⁶ factories and later, electricity, transformed productivity.

For the first time, *output*⁷ could rise dramatically without requiring *proportional*⁸ increases in labour. Railways, steel production and eventually cars, aviation and digital technology created *wave after wave*⁹ of economic *expansion*¹⁰.

GDP¹¹ Becomes the Gold Standard¹²

Developed during the 1930s (see *GDP Fact Box*), GDP measures the total value of *goods and services*¹³ produced within an economy. Throughout the 20th century, governments increasingly viewed growth as the key indicator of national economic progress. Higher GDP meant more *employment*¹⁴, larger *tax revenues*¹⁵,

rising wages and better *public services*¹⁶. Following World War II, sustained

¹ *degrowth* di:'grəʊθ postwzrost (koncepcja świadomego ograniczania wzrostu gospodarczego)

² *in the long run* ɪn ðə lɒŋ rʌn na dłuższą metę, w dłuższej perspektywie

³ *to be constrained by sth* tə bi kən'streɪnd baɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ być ograniczonym przez coś

⁴ *manual labour* 'mænjʊəl 'leɪbə praca fizyczna, praca ręczna

⁵ *steam power* sti:m 'paʊə energia parowa

⁶ *mechanised* 'mekənəɪzd zmechanizowany

⁷ *output* 'aʊtpʊt tu: produkcja, wydajność

⁸ *proportional* prə'pɔːʃənəl proporcjonalny

⁹ *wave after wave* weɪv 'ɑːftə weɪv fala za falą

¹⁰ *expansion* ɪk'spænjən wzrost, ekspansja

¹¹ *GDP (Gross Domestic Product)* dʒɪ: di: pi:, grəʊs də'mestɪk 'prɒdʌkt produkt krajowy brutto (PKB)

¹² *gold standard* ɡəʊld 'stændəd tu: wzorzec, punkt odniesienia

¹³ *goods and services* ɡʊdz ənd 'sɜːvɪsɪz dobra i usługi

¹⁴ *employment* ɪm'plɔɪmənt zatrudnienie

¹⁵ *tax revenues* tæks 'revənjuːz wpływy z podatków, dochody podatkowe

¹⁶ *public services* 'pʌblɪk 'sɜːvɪsɪz usługi publiczne

economic expansion became the **cornerstone**¹⁷ of policy across **capitalist**¹⁸ economies.

Businesses embraced the same philosophy. **Shareholders**¹⁹ **demand**²⁰ rising profits, **executives**²¹ were rewarded for increasing revenues, and consumers were encouraged to **replace**²² products long before they **wore out**²³. Advertising became a sophisticated industry dedicated to **stimulating demand**²⁴ rather than simply informing customers.

By Many Metrics, the Era of Growth Has Been a Resounding Success²⁵:

Since 1950, the global economy has expanded around **15-fold**²⁶, while the world population has increased from roughly 2.5 billion to more than 8 billion.

The **OECD**²⁷ still expects the world economy to grow by around 3 percent annually, illustrating how deeply growth is **embedded**²⁸ in economic thinking.

According to the OECD, global GDP grew by around 170 percent between 1990 and 2022, while **greenhouse-gas emissions**²⁹ increased by about 60 percent, showing that economies have become less **carbon-intensive**³⁰ but **have not eliminated**³¹ **environmental impacts**³².

A government announcing annual GDP growth of four percent is generally viewed as successful. Falling GDP, by contrast, usually signals **recession**³³ and political trouble.

Financial markets also **respond**³⁴ closely to GDP forecasts. **Central banks**³⁵ adjust **interest rates**³⁶ partly to encourage or **restrain**³⁷ economic expansion, while businesses **base**³⁸ **investment**³⁹ decisions on expectations of future growth.

The Downsides⁴⁰ of Growth

However, GDP measures economic activity rather than **quality of life**⁴¹. As Robert F. Kennedy put it in 1968:

“GDP measures everything... except that which makes life **worthwhile**⁴².”

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), GDP should not be confused with broader measures of **social welfare**⁴³.

The central argument behind de-growth begins with a simple observation: growth depends upon using more natural resources.

Factories consume **raw materials**⁴⁴ and energy. Transport networks **burn fuel**⁴⁵. Agriculture requires land and water. Construction uses huge quantities of sand, concrete, steel and timber. Digital services may appear weightless, yet enormous **data centres**⁴⁶ consume vast quantities of electricity and water.

As economies grow, overall consumption usually increases **commensurately**⁴⁷. Although **renewable energy**⁴⁸, recycling and greater efficiency **have reduced**⁴⁹ the environmental impact of many industries, global demand continues to rise. According to the United Nations and the International Energy Agency, worldwide **resource consumption**⁵⁰ and **energy use**⁵¹ have **expanded dramatically**⁵² over

¹⁷ **cornerstone** 'kɔːnəstəʊn fundament, kamień węgielny

¹⁸ **capitalist** 'kæpɪtəlɪst kapitalistyczny

¹⁹ **shareholder** 'ʃeəhəʊldə akcjonariusz, udziałowiec

²⁰ **to demand sth** tə dɪ'mɑːnd 'sʌmθɪŋ domagać się czegoś, żądać czegoś

²¹ **executive** ɪg'zekjʊtɪv dyrektor, wysoki rangą menedżer

²² **to replace sth** tə rɪ'pleɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ wymieniać coś, zastępować coś

²³ **to wear out** tə weə aʊt zużyć się

²⁴ **to stimulate demand** tə 'stɪmjəleɪt dɪ'mɑːnd pobudzać popyt

²⁵ **resounding success** rɪ'zaʊndɪŋ sək'ses ogromny sukces, niekwestionowany sukces

²⁶ **15-fold** 'fɪftiːn fəʊld piętnastokrotnie

²⁷ **OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)** əʊ iː siː diː, ɔːɡənə'zeɪʃən fə 'ekə'nɒmɪk kəʊ'ɒpə'reɪʃən and dɪ'veləpmənt Organizacja Współpracy Gospodarczej i Rozwoju

²⁸ **embedded** ɪm'bedɪd tuː zakorzeniony, osadzony

²⁹ **greenhouse-gas emissions** 'ɡriːnhaʊs ɡæs rɪ'mɪʃənz emisje gazów cieplarnianych

ECONOMIST HERMAN DALY ARGUED THAT ECONOMIES SHOULD AIM FOR A “STEADY-STATE” RATHER THAN PERPETUAL EXPANSION.

³⁰ **carbon-intensive** 'kɑːbən ɪn'tensɪv emisyjny, wymagający dużych emisji dwutlenku węgla

³¹ **to eliminate sth** tə ɪ'lɪmɪneɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ wyeliminować, usunąć coś

³² **environmental impact** ɪn'vaɪrən'məntəl 'ɪmpækt wpływ na środowisko

³³ **recession** rɪ'seʃən recesja

³⁴ **to respond to sth** tə rɪ'spɒnd tə 'sʌmθɪŋ reagować na coś

³⁵ **central bank** 'sentrəl bæŋk bank centralny

³⁶ **interest rate** 'ɪntrəst reɪt stopa procentowa

³⁷ **to restrain sth** tə rɪ'streɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ ograniczać, powstrzymywać coś

³⁸ **to base sth on sth** tə beɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ opierać coś na czymś

³⁹ **investment** ɪn'vestmənt inwestycja

⁴⁰ **downsides** 'daʊnsaɪdz wady, negatywne strony

⁴¹ **quality of life** 'kwɒləti ɒv laɪf jakość życia

⁴² **worthwhile** wɜːθ'waɪl wartościowy, mający sens

⁴³ **social welfare** 'səʊʃəl 'welfeə dobrobyt społeczny

⁴⁴ **raw materials** rɔː mə'tɪəriəlz surowce

⁴⁵ **to burn fuel** tə bɜːn 'fjuːəl spalać paliwo

⁴⁶ **data centre** 'deɪtə 'sentə centrum danych

⁴⁷ **commensurately** kə'menʃəreɪtli proporcjonalnie, odpowiednio

⁴⁸ **renewable energy** rɪ'njuːəbəl 'enədʒi energia odnawialna

⁴⁹ **to reduce sth** tə rɪ'djuːs 'sʌmθɪŋ zmniejszyć, zredukować coś

⁵⁰ **resource consumption** rɪ'sɔːs kən'sʌmpʃən zużycie zasobów

⁵¹ **energy use** 'enədʒi juːs zużycie energii

⁵² **to expand dramatically** tə ɪk'spænd drə'mætɪkəli gwałtownie wzrosnąć

recent decades despite major **technological improvements**⁵³.

Supporters of degrowth argue that efficiency alone cannot solve the problem. This is partly because of what economists call the “rebound effect,” most notable in **consumer electronics**⁵⁴ and fashion.

Falling production costs have made smartphones, televisions and clothing progressively more **affordable**⁵⁵, but rather than reducing resource consumption, cheaper prices have encouraged consumers to replace perfectly functional products more frequently:

The United Nations estimates that the world generated more than 60 million tonnes of **electronic waste**⁵⁶ in 2022, with less than a quarter formally **recycled**⁵⁷.

Likewise, global clothing production has approximately doubled since 2000, while **garments**⁵⁸ are typically worn for only half as long as they were two decades ago.

Greater manufacturing efficiency has therefore reduced the cost of individual products but increased total consumption – the **paradox**⁵⁹ at the heart of the degrowth debate.

Climate change has intensified these concerns. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has repeatedly **warned**⁶⁰ that **limiting**⁶¹ **global warming**⁶² requires **substantial**⁶³ reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, while **biodiversity loss**⁶⁴, **plastic pollution**⁶⁵ and declining natural **habitats**⁶⁶ have added urgency to calls for **systemic**⁶⁷ economic change.

Degrowth or Selective Growth?

Despite its name, degrowth should not be **considered synonymous with**⁶⁸ **stagnation**⁶⁹. Instead, it proposes deliberately reducing unnecessary production and consumption while improving quality of life. Supporters argue that societies should **shift away from**⁷⁰ measuring success solely through GDP and instead focus on health, education, environmental quality, leisure time and equality.

Rather than encouraging consumers to buy more goods, degrowth **advocates**⁷¹

promote **business models**⁷² that **maximise**⁷³ the useful life of existing products. The rapid growth of **second-hand marketplaces**⁷⁴ such as Vinted and OLX demonstrates that **resale**⁷⁵ can become a profitable industry. Companies including Patagonia have built **customer loyalty**⁷⁶ through **repair programmes**⁷⁷, Back Market has created a global business around **refurbished**⁷⁸ smartphones and laptops, and IKEA now operates furniture **buy-back schemes**⁷⁹. In fact, anybody can get involved by upcycling old products into something new.

Degrowth isn't **anti-capitalist**⁸⁰; rather, it encourages businesses to make money differently. Instead of maximising the number of new products sold, firms **generate revenue**⁸¹ by repairing, **refurbishing**⁸², renting, sharing or extending the life of existing **assets**⁸³. Many analysts see this as the foundation of the emerging **circular economy**⁸⁴, which seeks to

⁵³ **technological improvements** ,tekna'łodzikəl
im'pru:vmənts **postęp technologiczny,**
usprawnienia technologiczne

⁵⁴ **consumer electronics** kən'sju:mə elɪk'trɒnɪks
elektronika użytkowa

⁵⁵ **affordable** ə'fɔ:dəbl **przystępny cenowo**

⁵⁶ **electronic waste** elɪk'trɒnɪk weɪst **odpady**
elektroniczne, e-odpady

⁵⁷ **to recycle sth** tə ,ri:'saɪkl 'sʌmθɪŋ **przetwarzać**
coś, poddawać coś recyklingowi

⁵⁸ **garment** 'gɑ:mənt **ubranie, część garderoby**

⁵⁹ **paradox** 'pærədɒks **paradoks**

⁶⁰ **to warn that** tə wɔ:n ðæt **ostrzegać, że**

⁶¹ **to limit sth** tə 'lɪmɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ **ograniczać coś**

⁶² **global warming** 'glɔ:bl 'wɔ:mɪŋ **globalne**
ocieplenie

⁶³ **substantial** səb'stænʃəl **znaczny, istotny**

⁶⁴ **biodiversity loss** ,baɪə'dɪvə'vɜ:səti lɒs **utrata**
różnorodności biologicznej

⁶⁵ **plastic pollution** 'plæstɪk pə'lu:ʃən
zanieczyszczenie plastikiem

⁶⁶ **habitat** 'hæbɪtæt **siedlisko**

⁶⁷ **systemic** sɪ'stemɪk **systemowy**

⁶⁸ **to be synonymous with sth** tə bi sɪ'nɒnɪməs
wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ **być równoznacznym z czymś,**
być synonimem czegoś

⁶⁹ **stagnation** stæɡ'neɪʃən **stagnacja**

⁷⁰ **to shift away from sth** tə ʃɪft ə'weɪ frəm
'sʌmθɪŋ **odchodzić od czegoś**

⁷¹ **advocate** 'ædvəkeɪt **zwolennik, rzecznik**

⁷² **business model** 'bɪznɪs 'mɒdəl **model**
biznesowy

⁷³ **to maximise sth** tə 'mæksɪmaɪz 'sʌmθɪŋ
maksymalizować coś

⁷⁴ **second-hand marketplace** 'sekənd hænd
'mɑ:ktpleɪs **rynek towarów używanych**

⁷⁵ **resale** 'ri:seɪl **odsprzedaż, handel używanymi**
rzeczami

⁷⁶ **customer loyalty** 'kʌstəmə 'lɔɪəlti **lojalność**
klientów

⁷⁷ **repair programme** rɪ'peə 'prəʊɡræm **program**
napraw

⁷⁸ **refurbished** rɪ:'fɜ:bɪʃt **odnowiony, po renowacji**

⁷⁹ **buy-back scheme** baɪ bæk skim **program odkupu**

⁸⁰ **anti-capitalist** ,æntɪ 'kæpɪtəlɪst
antykapitalistyczny

⁸¹ **to generate revenue** tə 'dʒenəreɪt 'revɛnju:
generować przychody

⁸² **to refurbish sth** tə rɪ:'fɜ:bɪʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ **odnawiać,**
remontować coś

⁸³ **asset** 'æset **tu: zasób, aktywo**

⁸⁴ **circular economy** 'sɜ:kjʊlə 'ɪkɒnəmi
gospodarka cyrkularna, gospodarka
o obiegu zamkniętym

GDP Fact Box

- Creator: Simon Kuznets, an American economist
- Developed in 1934 for a US Congress report.
- The report was **commissioned**¹ during **the Great Depression**² to measure the full US economy.
- Standardised globally at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944.
- Kuznets warned that it measured production, not welfare. He subsequently criticised its **misuse**³.

¹ **to commission sth** tə kə'mɪʃən 'sʌmθɪŋ
tu: zlecać coś

² **the Great Depression** ðə greɪt dɪ'preʃən
Wielki Kryzys

³ **misuse** ,mɪs'ju:s **nadużycie,**
niewłaściwe użycie

INFOBOX

decouple⁸⁵ commercial success⁸⁶ from the relentless⁸⁷ extraction⁸⁸ of new resources.

The Leading Voices

Degrowth is not just some wacky⁸⁹, impractical utopian pipe dream⁹⁰ imagined by anti-capitalist hippies⁹¹, but a serious business and social argument developed by respected economists. Its roots stretch back several decades.

Economist Herman Daly argued that economies should aim for a “steady-state”⁹² rather than perpetual⁹³ expansion. French philosopher André Gorz questioned consumerism⁹⁴ during the 1970s, while economist Serge Latouche became one of the movement’s most influential modern advocates.

More recently, economist Jason Hickel has done more than anyone to bring the concept of degrowth into the mainstream⁹⁵. His 2020 book, *Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World*, has become the movement’s best-known work. It was selected as a Financial Times Book of the Year and a New Scientist Book of the Year.

The World Economic Forum⁹⁶ has also examined whether future prosperity⁹⁷ should place greater emphasis on resilience⁹⁸, sustainability and wellbeing⁹⁹ rather than simply maximising GDP growth.

Critics Remain Unconvinced¹⁰⁰

The idea of deliberately shrinking¹⁰¹ economic activity alarms¹⁰² many economists and business leaders.

Their biggest concern is employment. If businesses produce fewer goods and services, they may need fewer workers. Lower profits could reduce investment, while weaker tax revenues would make it harder to fund¹⁰³ healthcare, education and pensions¹⁰⁴, particularly in ageing societies¹⁰⁵ already facing rising public costs.

⁸⁵ to decouple sth from sth *tə di:ˈkʌpl ˈsʌmθɪŋ frəm ˈsʌmθɪŋ* oddzielić coś od czegoś



⁸⁶ commercial success *kəˈmɜːʃl səkˈses* sukces komercyjny

⁸⁷ relentless *rɪˈlentləs* nieustanny, bezlitosny

⁸⁸ extraction *ɪkˈstrækʃən* wydobywanie, eksploatacja

⁸⁹ wacky *ˈwæki* zwariowany, absurdalny

⁹⁰ pipe dream *paɪp dri:m* mrzonka, nierealistyczne marzenie

⁹¹ hippie *ˈhipi* hipis

⁹² steady-state *ˌstedɪ ˈsteɪt* stan równowagi, stan stacjonarny

⁹³ perpetual *pəˈpetʃuəl* wieczny, nieustający

⁹⁴ consumerism *kənˈsjuːməɪzəm* konsumpcjonizm

⁹⁵ to bring sth into the mainstream *tə brɪŋ ˈsʌmθɪŋ ˈɪntə ðə ˈmeɪnstri:m* wprowadzić coś do głównego nurtu

⁹⁶ World Economic Forum *wɜːld ˌekəˈnɒmɪk ˈfɔːrəm* Światowe Forum Ekonomiczne

⁹⁷ prosperity *prɒˈsperəti* dobrobyt, pomyślność

⁹⁸ resilience *rɪˈzɪliəns* odporność, zdolność do adaptacji

⁹⁹ wellbeing *ˌwelˈbiːɪŋ* dobrostan

¹⁰⁰ to remain unconvinced *tə riˈmeɪn ˌʌnkənˈvɪnst* pozostawać nieprzekonanym

¹⁰¹ to shrink *tə ʃrɪŋk* kurczyć (się), zmniejszać (się)

¹⁰² to alarm sb *tə əˈlɑːm ˈsʌmbədi* niepokoić kogoś, alarmować kogoś

¹⁰³ to fund sth *tə fʌnd ˈsʌmθɪŋ* finansować coś

¹⁰⁴ pension *ˈpenʃən* emerytura

¹⁰⁵ ageing society *ˈeɪdʒɪŋ səˈsaɪəti* starzejące się społeczeństwo



Critics also argue that slower growth could reduce spending on research, delaying **breakthroughs**¹⁰⁶ in medicine, clean energy and artificial intelligence. Supporters of **green growth**¹⁰⁷ **contend**¹⁰⁸ that economies can continue expanding while **cutting emissions**¹⁰⁹ through renewable energy, **electrification**¹¹⁰, circular manufacturing and cleaner **industrial processes**¹¹¹.

Modern financial systems also rely on expectations of future growth. **Pension funds**¹¹², **stock markets**¹¹³ and **government borrowing**¹¹⁴ are built around expanding economies, meaning degrowth could require a fundamental **redesign**¹¹⁵ of the global economic system.

Could Governments Ever Embrace¹¹⁶ Degrowth?

Despite growing **academic**¹¹⁷ interest, degrowth remains **politically unpopular**¹¹⁸. Voters generally **associate**¹¹⁹ economic growth with jobs, rising incomes and better public services, making it difficult for politicians to advocate producing less.

Developing countries¹²⁰ are even less likely to embrace the concept. Many are still focused on **reducing poverty**¹²¹ and improving **living standards**¹²², arguing that wealthier nations should not **deny**¹²³ them the prosperity they themselves have enjoyed.

Instead, governments are more likely to **adopt**¹²⁴ individual degrowth ideas without using the label. Policies encouraging product repair, reducing waste, improving **public transport**¹²⁵, **boosting**¹²⁶ **energy efficiency**¹²⁷ and measuring wellbeing **alongside**¹²⁸ GDP are already becoming more common.

Degrowth is unlikely to become official policy in Washington, London or Brussels any time soon. Yet its influence is already evident. The debate has shifted from pursuing growth **at any cost**¹²⁹ towards asking what kind of growth best serves people and the planet.

¹⁰⁶ **breakthrough** 'breikθru: **przełom**

¹⁰⁷ **green growth** gri:n grəʊθ **zielony wzrost**
(wzrost przy jednoczesnym zmniejszaniu szkód dla środowiska)

¹⁰⁸ **to contend that** tə kən'tend ðæt **twierdzić, że**

¹⁰⁹ **to cut emissions** tə kʌt i'miʃənz **ogranaczać emisje**

¹¹⁰ **electrification** iˌlektrɪfɪ'keɪʃən **elektryfikacja**

¹¹¹ **industrial process** ɪn'dastriəl 'prəʊses **proces przemysłowy**

¹¹² **pension fund** 'penʃən fʌnd **fundusz emerytalny**

¹¹³ **stock market** stɒk 'mɑːkɪt **giełda papierów wartościowych**

¹¹⁴ **government borrowing** 'gʌvənmənt 'bɒrəʊɪŋ **zadłużenie rządowe, pożyczki rządowe**

¹¹⁵ **redesign** ˌriːdɪ'zeɪn **przeprojektowanie**

¹¹⁶ **to embrace sth** tə ɪm'breɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: przyjąć coś**

¹¹⁷ **academic** ˌæke'demɪk **tu: naukowy, akademicki**

¹¹⁸ **politically unpopular** pə'lɪtɪkəli ʌn'pɒpjʊlə **niepopularny politycznie**

¹¹⁹ **to associate sth with sth** tə ə'səʊʃieɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ **wiō 'sʌmθɪŋ kojarzyć coś z czymś**

¹²⁰ **developing country** dɪ'veləpɪŋ 'kʌntri **kraj rozwijający się**

¹²¹ **to reduce poverty** tə rɪ'djuːs 'pɒvəti **zmniejszać ubóstwo**

¹²² **living standards** 'lɪvɪŋ 'stændədz **poziom życia**

¹²³ **to deny sb sth** tə dɪ'naɪ 'sʌmbədi 'sʌmθɪŋ **odmówić komuś czegoś**

¹²⁴ **to adopt sth** tə ə'dɒpt 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: przyjąć, wprowadzić coś**

¹²⁵ **public transport** 'pʌblɪk 'trænsɒɪt **transport publiczny**

¹²⁶ **to boost sth** tə buːst 'sʌmθɪŋ **zwiększać, napędzać, wspierać coś**

¹²⁷ **energy efficiency** 'enədʒi i'fɪʃənsi **efektywność energetyczna**

¹²⁸ **alongside X** əˌlɒŋ'saɪd eks **tu: obok**

¹²⁹ **at any cost** ət 'eni kɒst **za wszelką cenę**

Iceland Says No To EU

The idea of Iceland joining the European Union has been a topic of discussion for several years. **Nonetheless**¹, in a recent referendum, almost 53 percent of those who voted rejected the **resumption**² of EU **accession talks**³ with Brussels. **Jonathan Moore** examines the reasoning behind this decision.

The History

Back in 1994, Iceland joined the newly formed European Economic Area (EEA), along with Norway. With that, these countries gained full access to the single European market **despite**⁴ not being **fully fledged**⁵ EU member states. The financial crisis of 2008 – which lasted up until 2011 – may have been **instrumental**⁶ in Iceland feeling the need to enter the EU.

Talks Begin in Earnest⁷

In July 2009, the then Icelandic government – a coalition between the Social Democratic Alliance (Samfylkingin) and the Left-Green Movement – **applied for**⁸ EU membership. In June 2010, the EU Council decided to open negotiations on accession.

Talks Come to a Halt⁹

However, May 2013 saw the election of a new government formed by a coalition of the Progressive Party and the Independence Party (Framsóknarflokkurinn and Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn), which led to the **suspension**¹⁰ of negotiations. In March 2015, the Reykjavik **administration**¹¹ made it clear that it did not want the EU to consider Iceland as a potential candidate for membership.

The Case in Favour¹²

However, the unstable global geopolitical climate caused by the conflict in Ukraine as well as America's aspirations in the Arctic – with the Trump administration openly declaring its desire to **either** **invade** **or**¹³ **acquire**¹⁴ Iceland's big neighbour

Info Box

Greenland extends considerably further north and west than Iceland, further towards the east and even towards the south. The southern **tip**¹ of mainland Iceland, the Kötlutangi **spit**², lies at approx. 63° 23' N, while the southernmost point in Greenland, Cape Farewell, lies at approx. 59° 46' N, putting it on the same **latitude**³ as Scotland's Shetland Islands.

¹ tip **tip** **tu:** kraniec, czubek

² spit **spit** **tu:** mierzeja

³ latitude **'lætitju:d** szerokość geograficzna

INFOBOX

¹ nonetheless **ˌnʌnðə'les** jednakże

² resumption **rɪ'zʌmpʃən** wznowienie

³ accession talks **æk'seɪn tɔ:ks** rozmowy o przystąpieniu (do organizacji)

⁴ despite **dis'paɪt** pomimo

⁵ fully fledged **ˌfʊli 'fledʒd** **tu:** pełnoprawny

⁶ to be instrumental in sth **tə bi ˌɪnstrə'mentl ɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ** odegrać kluczową rolę w czymś

⁷ in earnest **ɪn 'ɜ:nɪst** na poważnie, z pełnym zaangażowaniem

⁸ to apply for sth **tə ə'plaɪ fə 'sʌmθɪŋ** wnioskować o coś

⁹ to come to a halt **tə kʌm tə ə hɔ:lt** zatrzymać się, stanąć

¹⁰ suspension **sə'spenʃn** **tu:** zawieszenie

¹¹ administration **əd,mɪnɪ'streɪʃn** **tu:** rząd, administracja

¹² in sb's favour **ɪn 'sʌmbədʒ 'feɪvə** na czyjaś korzyść

¹³ either... or... **'aɪðə... ɔ:... albo... albo...**

¹⁴ to acquire sth **tə ə'kwəɪə 'sʌmθɪŋ** przejąć, nabyć coś

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Greenland – reignited¹⁵ the debate over Reykjavik's EU membership. Despite the fact that Iceland is already a member of NATO, the country has no standing army, so Icelandic Europhiles¹⁶ believe that solidarity¹⁷ with Europe would provide increased¹⁸ protection against the US administration if it were to threaten¹⁹ to do the same thing to Iceland. This prompted²⁰ the Icelandic government to call a referendum on resuming EU membership negotiations in 2026.

Moreover, according to²¹ the CEPS, a prominent Brussels-based think tank²² for debate on EU-related issues, the Union is already Iceland's main trading partner²³, with approx. 66.5 percent of its exports going to EU customers. According to the WTEX (World's Top Exports) website, most of its top ten export destinations between 2024 and 2025 were EU member states. The biggest importer of Icelandic goods was the Netherlands on 34.3 percent. Additionally, by entering the Union, Iceland would automatically become a member of the European Customs Union²⁴, and by entering the Eurozone²⁵, Reykjavik would possibly solve a perennial²⁶ economic problem: the volatility²⁷ of its currency. Both of these developments would boost²⁸ trade and investment.

There are also legal issues to consider: according to the present EEA agreement, Iceland has no seat at the EU decision-making table²⁹, so it must adopt a number of EU laws submissively³⁰. EU membership would enable Iceland to³¹ defend its interests within Europe by voting in EU policy negotiations. It would even have the power to veto³² unfavourable³³ decisions affecting its economy, especially those connected with the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In simple terms, Iceland would be a lawmaker³⁴ instead of³⁵ a law taker³⁶.

The Case Against

As an island nation that only gained independence from Denmark as recently as 17 June 1944, many Icelanders view EU membership as a potential prelude³⁷ to the

loss of their sovereignty³⁸, and this issue was central to the anti-EU campaign.

Another pivotal³⁹ issue was fisheries⁴⁰, the backbone⁴¹ of Iceland's economy. According to the OEC, fish fillets⁴², non-filleted⁴³ fresh fish and non-filleted frozen fish were the country's second, third and fourth biggest exports respectively during 2025 (its top export being raw aluminium⁴⁴). The idea of Brussels imposing⁴⁵ potentially devastating new fishing quotas⁴⁶ on Iceland and opening up its waters to foreign fishing companies put⁴⁷ Icelandic voters off voting for EU membership. Even the EU's apparent willingness to compromise with Reykjavik on fisheries failed to convince enough Icelanders, some of whom feared that their country would be unable to stand its ground⁴⁸ at the EU negotiating table.

The End Result: Iceland Says No

In the end, 82.5 percent of eligible voters participated in the referendum on reopening accession talks with the EU, with 52.8 percent of them voting against and 47.2 percent voting in favour. Following the result of the referendum, Prime Minister Kristrún Mjöll Frostadóttir stated that her government would not proceed with the negotiations. Instead, it would focus on strengthening⁴⁹ its ties with the EEA.

Only the Capital Said Yes

Iceland is divided into six electoral constituencies⁵⁰: Reykjavik North, Reykjavik South, North West, North East, South and South West Constituencies (in Icelandic: Reykjavíkurborg norður, Reykjavíkurborg suður, Norðvesturkjördæmi, Norðausturkjördæmi, Suðvesturkjördæmi and Suðurborgkjördæmi).

Only the two Reykjavik constituencies voted in favour of EU accession: 57.5 percent of Reykjavik North and 54.5 percent of Reykjavik South. The remaining rural

¹⁵ to reignite sth *tə ˌriːɪɡˈnaɪt* 'samθɪŋ na nowo rozpalic, wznowic

¹⁶ Europhile *ˈjʊərəʊfaɪl* zwolennik integracji europejskiej

¹⁷ solidarity *ˌsɒlɪˈdærəti* solidarność

¹⁸ increased *ˈɪŋkriːst* zwiększony

¹⁹ to threaten *tə ˈθreɪn* za/grozić

²⁰ to prompt sb to do sth *tə ˈprɒmpt* 'sambədi tə duː 'samθɪŋ skłonić kogoś do zrobienia czegoś

²¹ according to X *əˈkɔːdɪŋ tə* eks według X

²² think tank *θɪŋk tæŋk* ośrodek analityczny, think tank

²³ trading partner *ˈtreɪdɪŋ ˈpɑːtnə* partner handlowy

²⁴ customs union *ˈkʌstəmz ˈjuːniən* unia celna

²⁵ Eurozone *ˈjʊərəʊzəʊn* strefa euro

²⁶ perennial *pəˈreniəl* wieczny, nieustanny

²⁷ volatility *ˌvɒləˈtɪləti* niestabilność, zmienność

²⁸ to boost sth *tə buːst* 'samθɪŋ pobudzić, zwiększyć coś

²⁹ decision-making table *dɪˈsɪʒn ˌmeɪkɪŋ ˈteɪbl* stół negocjacyjny, organ decyzyjny

³⁰ submissively *səbˈmɪsɪvli* biernie, ulegle

³¹ to enable sb to do sth *tə ɪˈneɪbl* 'sambədi tə duː 'samθɪŋ umożliwiać komuś zrobienie czegoś

³² to veto sth *tə ˈviːtəʊ* 'samθɪŋ zawetować coś

³³ unfavourable *ˌʌnˈfeɪvərəbl* niekorzystny

³⁴ lawmaker *ˈlɔːməɪkə* prawodawca

³⁵ instead of sth *ɪnˈsted əv* 'samθɪŋ zamiast czegoś

³⁶ law taker *lɔː ˈteɪkə tuː* państwo przyjmujące przepisy, na których tworzenie nie ma wpływu

³⁷ prelude *ˈpreljʊːd* wstęp, preludium

³⁸ sovereignty *ˈsɒvrənəti* suwerenność

³⁹ pivotal *ˈpɪvətl* kluczowy, najważniejszy

⁴⁰ fishery *ˈfɪʃəri* rybołówstwo

⁴¹ backbone *ˈbækbəʊn tuː* rdzeń, filar

⁴² fillet *ˈfɪlɪt* filet

⁴³ non-filleted *nɒn ˈfɪlɪtɪd* niefiletowany

⁴⁴ raw aluminium *rɔː ˌæljəˈmɪniəm* surowe aluminium

⁴⁵ to impose sth on sb *tə ɪmˈpəʊz* 'samθɪŋ ɒn 'sambədi narzucić coś komuś

⁴⁶ fishing quota *ˈfɪʃɪŋ ˈkwɒtə* kwota połowowa

⁴⁷ to put sb off sth *tə pʊt* 'sambədi ɒf 'samθɪŋ zniechęcić kogoś do czegoś

⁴⁸ to stand one's ground *tə stænd wʌnz graʊnd* obstawać przy swoim, nie ustępować

⁴⁹ to strengthen sth *tə ˈstreŋθən* 'samθɪŋ wzmacniać coś

⁵⁰ electoral constituency *ɪˌlektərəl kənˈstɪtjʊənsi* okręg wyborczy

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

to stand one's ground
/tə stænd wʌnz
graʊnd/
obstawać przy swoim,
nie ustępować

constituencies were opposed to joining the EU. [Indeed](#)⁵¹, in the North West constituency – a key fishing and agricultural region – as much as 62.9 percent of the electorate said no, as did 61.2 percent of voters in the North East, 60.2 percent of voters in the South and 53 percent of voters in the South West. In short, the [Eurosceptic](#)⁵² rural vote basically [outweighed](#)⁵³ the pro-European urban vote.

Right or Wrong?

The high [turnout](#)⁵⁴ in the Icelandic EU referendum clearly [indicates](#)⁵⁵ how much the issue mattered to most Icelanders. [Ultimately](#)⁵⁶, it was the Eurosceptics that [emerged victorious](#)⁵⁷, effectively ending the debate. However, [in view of](#)⁵⁸ the country's economic ties with Europe and America's ambitions for the Arctic Region, it remains to be seen whether Iceland has made the right or wrong decision by [opting out](#)⁵⁹ of negotiations with Brussels.

⁵¹ indeed ɪn'diːd w rzeczy samej

⁵² Eurosceptic ˌjʊərəsəp'tskeptɪk eurosceptyczny

⁵³ to outweigh sth tə ˌaʊtˈweɪ ˈsʌmθɪŋ
przeważać nad czymś

⁵⁴ turnout ˈtɜːnaʊt frekwencja (wyborcza)

⁵⁵ to indicate tə ˈɪndɪkeɪt wskazywać

⁵⁶ ultimately ˈʌltɪmətli w końcu, ostatecznie

⁵⁷ to emerge victorious tə ɪˈmɜːdʒ vɪk'tɔːrɪəs
wygrać, odnieść zwycięstwo

⁵⁸ in view of X ɪn vjuː ɒv eks w świetle X, biorąc pod uwagę X

⁵⁹ to opt out of sth tə ɒpt aʊt ɒv ˈsʌmθɪŋ
zrezygnować z czegoś, wycofać się z czegoś

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Pulling a Sickie¹ – How Europe Is Tackling² Employee Sick Leave³

REMEMBERING

sick leave
/ː sɪk li:v/
L4, zwolnienie
chorobowe

Be honest – have you ever **phoned in sick**⁴ with a **hangover**⁵ or phantom “**bad back**⁶?” Some employees think that a few days’ sick leave each year is a standard **perk**⁷, but **employers**⁸ are **clamping down**⁹. The **BEM Team** checks the latest absence policy.

For generations, “pulling a sickie” has been part of workplace culture. The challenge for employers is how to protect the rights of honest employees while **discouraging**¹⁰ those who **abuse the system**¹¹. How does Europe deal with the issue?

Some countries place considerable trust in employees, **allowing**¹² several days of **self-certified**¹³ sickness before medical evidence is required. Others expect workers to visit a doctor almost immediately.

German Reform

Germany has traditionally provided some of Europe’s most generous sickness benefits. Employees receive full pay from their employer for up to six weeks of illness before **statutory health insurance**¹⁴ **takes over**¹⁵ with reduced payments for longer-term absences.

- ¹ to pull a sickie tə pʊl ə 'sɪki zasymulować chorobę, żeby nie przyjść do pracy, udawać chorego
- ² to tackle sth tə 'tækl 'sʌmθɪŋ radzić sobie z czymś
- ³ employee sick leave ˌemplɔɪː sɪk li:v L4 pracownika
- ⁴ to phone in sick tə fəʊn ɪn sɪk zadzwonić do pracy i powiedzieć, że się jest chorym
- ⁵ hangover 'hæŋgəʊvə kac
- ⁶ bad back bæd bæk ból pleców
- ⁷ perk pɜ:k przywilej, benefit pracowniczy
- ⁸ employer ɪm'plɔɪə pracodawca
- ⁹ to clamp down tə klæmp daʊn tu: zastrzyć kontrolę
- ¹⁰ to discourage sb tə dɪs'kʌrɪdʒ 'sʌmbədi zniechęcać kogoś
- ¹¹ to abuse the system tə ə'bjʊ:z ðə 'sɪstəm nadużywać systemu, wykorzystywać system
- ¹² to allow sth tə ə'laʊ 'sʌmθɪŋ pozwalać na coś
- ¹³ self-certified 'self'sɜ:tɪfaɪd poświadczony samodzielnie przez pracownika, bez zaświadczenia lekarskiego
- ¹⁴ statutory health insurance 'stætɪtəri helθ ɪn'ʃʊ:rəns ustawowe ubezpieczenie zdrowotne
- ¹⁵ to take over tə teɪk 'əʊvə tu: przejmować odpowiedzialność



ON THE FACE
OF IT, FRENCH
AND GERMAN
EMPLOYEES ARE
CLEARLY THE
WORST OFFENDERS,
WHILE BRITISH AND
POLISH WORKERS
TAKE FEWER DAYS
OFF SICK.

OGLĄDAJ

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Until now, employees were expected to provide a **medical certificate**¹⁶ after three calendar days of sickness, although employers already had the legal right to insist on it from the first day. The German government is now seeking to make day-one certification the standard requirement, ending the pandemic-era practice of obtaining **sick notes**¹⁷ by telephone.

The reforms follow concerns over rising sickness absence. Germany has recorded comparatively high levels of employee sick leave in recent years, prompting business groups to argue that generous arrangements may unintentionally encourage unnecessary absences. Supporters believe earlier **medical verification**¹⁸ will reduce abuse and improve productivity.

Critics disagree. Medical associations warn that **forcing** people with minor illnesses **to**¹⁹ visit **surgeries**²⁰ immediately could **increase pressure on**²¹ healthcare systems and expose **vulnerable**²² patients to unnecessary infection risks. Some employment experts also argue that most workers are honest, meaning stricter rules may punish everyone because of a small minority.

The United Kingdom: Trust with Limits

Moving along the **trust spectrum**²³, Britain remains one of Europe's more trust-based systems. Employees can normally self-certify sickness for up to seven calendar days before obtaining a note from a healthcare professional. During this period, employers generally cannot insist upon medical evidence, although businesses often require employees to complete self-certification forms upon returning to work.

This approach seeks to achieve a **pragmatic happy medium**²⁴. Visiting a **GP**²⁵ just to confirm a **short-lived**²⁶ virus would place additional strain on the already **overstretched**²⁷ National Health Service (**NHS**)²⁸ while generating little practical benefit. Instead, employers rely on **return-to-work interviews**²⁹ (See fact Box), **attendance monitoring**³⁰ and established **disciplinary procedures**³¹ to identify and manage repeated patterns of absence.

Many HR specialists argue that these measures often reveal far more than a doctor's certificate. Frequent Monday or Friday absences, repeated illnesses before **bank holidays**³² or recurring **short-term sickness**³³ may indicate underlying issues ranging from genuine health problems to **substance abuse**³⁴, poor morale or **disengagement**³⁵.

Scandinavia's Culture of Trust

The Nordic countries generally place considerable faith in employees, combining generous welfare systems with active management. For example, Sweden allows employees to remain off work for more than a week before requiring a medical certificate. Workers receive around 80 percent of their pay during the employer-funded period before the national insurance system **assumes responsibility**³⁶ for longer absences.

Norway and Denmark also operate relatively flexible systems, although **certification requirements**³⁷ differ between employers and sectors. Rather than relying solely on medical evidence, many Nordic employers place greater emphasis on **rehabilitation**³⁸, **early intervention**³⁹ and helping staff return to work safely.

This reflects wider cultural attitudes. High levels of social trust, strong **occupational health services**⁴⁰ and cooperative **labour relations**⁴¹ mean employers often view sickness management as a shared responsibility rather than an exercise in **policing**⁴² attendance.

France, Spain and Beyond

Elsewhere in Europe, the picture becomes even more varied.

France requires **medical justification**⁴³ quickly, with certificates generally expected within 48 hours of the start of illness. **Social security payments**⁴⁴ begin after an

¹⁷ sick note sik nəʊt zwolnienie lekarskie

¹⁸ medical verification 'medɪkl ,verɪfɪ'keɪʃn weryfikacja lekarska

¹⁹ to force sb to do sth tə fɔ:s 'sambədi tə du: 'sʌmθɪŋ zmuszać kogoś do zrobienia czegoś

²⁰ surgery 'sɜ:dʒəri tu: przychodnia lekarska, gabinet lekarski

²¹ to increase pressure on sth tə 'ɪnkrɪ:s 'preʃə(r) ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ zwiększyć presję/nacisk na coś

²² vulnerable 'vʌlnərəbl podatny

²³ trust spectrum trʌst 'spektrəm skala zaufania

²⁴ pragmatic happy medium præg'mætɪk ,hæpi 'mi:diəm rozsądny kompromis, złoty środek

²⁵ GP (general practitioner) dʒi: pi:'dʒenərəl præk'tɪʃnə lekarz rodzinny

²⁶ short-lived ʃɔ:t 'lɪvd krótkotrwały

²⁷ overstretched ,əʊvə'stretʃt przeciążony, przepracowany

²⁸ NHS (National Health Service) en ɪtʃ es, 'næʃnəl helθ 'sɜ:vɪs brytyjska publiczna służba zdrowia

²⁹ return-to-work interview rɪ'tɜ:n tə wɜ:k 'ɪntəvju: rozmowa z pracownikiem po powrocie do pracy po chorobie

³⁰ attendance monitoring ə'tendəns 'mɒnɪtərɪŋ monitorowanie obecności

³¹ disciplinary procedure ,dɪsɪ'plɪnəri prə'sɪ:dʒə procedura dyscyplinarna

³² bank holiday bæŋk 'hɒlədeɪ dzień ustawowo wolny od pracy

³³ short-term sickness ʃɔ:t tɜ:m 'sɪknəs krótkotrwała choroba

³⁴ substance abuse 'sʌbstəns ə'bju:s nadużywanie substancji psychoaktywnych

³⁵ disengagement ,dɪsɪ'nʒeɪdʒmənt brak zaangażowania

³⁶ to assume responsibility tə ə'sju:m rɪ'spɒnsə'bɪləti przejąć odpowiedzialność

³⁷ certification requirement ,sɜ:tɪfɪ'keɪʃn rɪ'kwærəmənt wymóg zaświadczenia

³⁸ rehabilitation ,rɪ'hæ,bɪlɪ'teɪʃn rehabilitacja, powrót do zdrowia

³⁹ early intervention 'ɜ:li ,ɪntə'venʃn wczesna interwencja

⁴⁰ occupational health service ,ɒkʃjə'peɪʃnəl helθ 'sɜ:vɪs usługi medycyny pracy

⁴¹ labour relations 'leɪbə rɪ'leɪʃnz stosunki pracy

⁴² to police tə'pə:lɪs tu: kontrolować, egzekwować

⁴³ medical justification 'medɪkl ,dʒʌstɪfɪ'keɪʃn uzasadnienie medyczne

⁴⁴ social security payment 'səʊʃl sɪ'kjʊərətɪ 'peɪmənt świadczenie z ubezpieczenia społecznego

¹⁶ medical certificate 'medɪkl sə'tɪfɪkət zaświadczenie lekarskie

initial **waiting period**⁴⁵, although many employers **top up**⁴⁶ salaries in line with **union agreements**⁴⁷.

Spain is one of the stricter countries. The first three days of sickness are **unpaid**⁴⁸. Despite this, Spanish workers still record relatively high levels of sickness absence, suggesting that financial penalties alone do not determine attendance behaviour.

In the Netherlands, employers **bear much of the responsibility**⁴⁹ for supporting sick employees, often paying wages for **prolonged**⁵⁰ periods while actively investing in rehabilitation and **workplace adjustments**⁵¹. The emphasis is less on proving illness than on helping employees recover and return to productive work.

Does Stricter Certification Reduce Absence?

Common-sense logic would say that making the rules tougher would discourage casual or fake illness and reduce absence, but the evidence is surprisingly mixed.

Labour Turnover

Labour turnover (as a percentage) is calculated by dividing the number of employees who left during a given period by the average number of employees in the organisation. For example, if a company employed an average of 200 people during the year and 20 left, its labour turnover rate would be 10 percent. Rates below 10 percent could suggest employee satisfaction, but also **stagnation**¹. Once rates move above 20 percent, **alarm bells should start to ring**².

¹ stagnation ˈstæɡˌneɪʃn **stagnacja**

² alarm bells should ring ˈəːlɑːm belz ʃəd rɪŋ **powinny zapalić się czerwone lampki, powinno to zaniepokoić**

INFOBOX

Employee Absence in Selected European Countries

On the face of it, French and German employees are clearly the worst **offenders**, while British and Polish workers take fewer days off sick. However, the moment where certification is required varies, making not only comparisons difficult, but also determining the relationship between early certification and lower absence.

Certification Requirements

COUNTRY	AVERAGE SICK DAYS PER EMPLOYEE (2024 OR LATEST AVAILABLE)	DOCTOR'S NOTE REQUIRED
France	~16	Usually within 48 hours
Germany	14.8	Day 1 (new rules)
Sweden	~10	After 7 days
Netherlands	~9	Employer determines
Spain	~7	From the first day of absence
Poland	~6	From the first day of absence
United Kingdom	4.4	After 7 days

Sources: Destatis (Germany), ONS (UK), OECD sickness absence database, WHO European Health Information Gateway and national statistical offices.

INFOBOX

International comparisons are far from straightforward. While **on the face of it**⁵², some countries, such as Germany, clearly have higher absence rates than some of their neighbours, it is often a case of “**apples and oranges**”⁵³. Different criteria mean the metrics do not give direct, **like-for-like comparisons**⁵⁴ (see the tables).

The data shows that countries with generous sick pay do not necessarily experience the highest absence rates, while countries imposing tighter rules do not always achieve lower **absenteeism**⁵⁵. National culture may play a role, so what works well in one country may not automatically be successful elsewhere.

⁴⁵ waiting period ˈweɪtɪŋ ˈpiəriəd **okres oczekiwania**

⁴⁶ to top up ˈtə ˈtɒp ʌp **dopłacić**

⁴⁷ union agreement ˈjuːniən əˈɡriːmənt **układ zbiorowy pracy, porozumienie związkowe**

⁴⁸ unpaid ˌʌnˈpeɪd **tu: bezpłatny, nieodpłatny**

⁴⁹ to bear responsibility ˈtə beə rɪˌsponsəˈbɪləti **ponosić odpowiedzialność**

⁵⁰ prolonged ˈprɒlɒŋd **przedłużony, długotrwały**

⁵¹ workplace adjustment ˈwɜːkpleɪs əˈdʒʌstmənt **dostosowanie miejsca pracy**

⁵² on the face of it ɒn ðə feɪs ɒv ɪt **na pierwszy rzut oka, pozornie**

⁵³ apples and oranges ˈæplz ənd ˈɒrɪndʒɪz **nieporównywalne rzeczy**

⁵⁴ like-for-like comparison ˈlaɪk fə ˈlaɪk kəmˈpærɪsn **porównanie jeden do jednego**

⁵⁵ absenteeism ˌæbsənˈtiːzəm **absencja**



SICKY STATISTICS

Complete each sentence with one option from the table. Use each option once. Check the article for the facts before choosing your answers; grammar alone will not tell you which comparison is correct.

A. fewer B. most C. longer D. less E. higher F. a few
G. lower H. more

1. Some employees think taking _____ days of sick leave each year is just a standard job perk.
2. Germany has recorded _____ levels of employee sick leave than some of its European neighbours.
3. Repeated short-term absences can reveal _____ about workplace problems than a doctor's certificate.
4. Swedish employees can generally remain off work for a _____ period than French employees before a medical certificate is required.
5. Countries with stricter certification rules do not always have _____ absence rates.
6. Figures suggest that British employees take _____ sick days on average than French employees.
7. Allowing self-certification for a short illness can put _____ pressure on GP services.
8. The _____ successful organisations combine certification with interviews and analysis of absence patterns.

BEM TEST

Answers: 1. F, 2. E, 3. H, 4. C, 5. G, 6. A, 7. D, 8. B

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATIONS RECOGNISE THAT EFFECTIVE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT REQUIRES A PACKAGE OF MEASURES.

Researchers increasingly argue that sickness absence reflects a complex mix of workplace culture, job satisfaction, stress, physical health, **demographics**⁵⁶ and **occupational risk**⁵⁷ rather than certification rules alone. For example, construction workers naturally experience more genuine injuries than office workers. Healthcare staff face higher exposure to **infectious diseases**⁵⁸. Employees suffering from **burnout**⁵⁹ or poor mental health may require justifiable periods away from work.

⁵⁶ demographics ,dema'græfiks demografia

⁵⁷ occupational risk ,ɒkjə'peɪʃənl rɪsk ryzyko zawodowe

⁵⁸ infectious disease ɪn'fekʃəs dɪ'zi:z choroba zakaźna

Technology Changes the Equation

Digitalisation is also **reshaping**⁶⁰ sickness management. Germany's electronic sick note system already enables doctors to submit certificates digitally to insurers and employers, reducing paperwork while making verification faster and more efficient.

Across Europe, **HR software**⁶¹ increasingly identifies **attendance patterns**⁶² automatically, allowing managers to spot repeated short-term absences, **seasonal trends**⁶³ or potential **wellbeing issues**⁶⁴ much earlier than traditional manual records.

Rather than focusing solely on catching dishonest employees, many organisations now proactively use attendance data to identify departments experiencing excessive **workloads**⁶⁵, poor management or rising stress levels. This can be particularly **telling**⁶⁶ when high sickness levels **coincide with**⁶⁷ a higher-than-company-average **labour turnover**⁶⁸ (see *Fact Box*) within a department.

Inconclusive Evidence

It can be **perplexing**⁶⁹ for HR departments that neither a **laissez-faire**⁷⁰ nor

⁵⁹ burnout 'bɜːnaʊt wypalenie zawodowe

⁶⁰ to reshape sth tə ʀi:'ʃeɪp 'sʌmθɪŋ przekształcać coś

⁶¹ HR software ɜːf'ɑː 'sɒftweə oprogramowanie HR, system do zarządzania kadrami

⁶² attendance pattern ə'tendəns 'pætən wzorzec obecności

⁶³ seasonal trend 'siːzənl trend trend sezonowy

⁶⁴ wellbeing issue 'welbiːŋ 'ɪʃuː problem ze stanem zdrowia, problem z samopoczuciem

⁶⁵ workload 'wɜːkləʊd obciążenie pracą

⁶⁶ telling 'telɪŋ tuː wymowny, znamieny

⁶⁷ to coincide with sth tə ,kəʊɪn'saɪd wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ być zbieżnym z czymś, zbiegać się z czymś

⁶⁸ labour turnover 'leɪbə 'tɜːnəʊvə rotacja pracowników

⁶⁹ perplexing pə'pleksɪŋ zdumiewający, kłopotliwy

⁷⁰ laissez-faire ,leɪseɪ 'feə podejście oparte na nieinterweniowaniu

draconian⁷¹ approach guarantees success. A highly suspicious culture can be **counterproductive**⁷², damaging employee morale or encouraging “**presenteeism**⁷³” (See Fact Box). Conversely, **unconditional trust**⁷⁴ may encourage a small minority to **exploit**⁷⁵ generous policies.

The most successful organisations recognise that effective **absence management**⁷⁶ requires a **package of measures**⁷⁷ including certification, return-to-work interviews and **data analysis**⁷⁸ to identify absence patterns and **root causes**⁷⁹. That way, they are not just preventing workers from “pulling a sickie” but **designing it out**⁸⁰ of the system.

Return-to-work Interviews

Held on an employee’s first day back after sickness, these brief, informal meetings confirm **fitness to return**¹, discuss any **ongoing health concerns**² and identify **workplace support**³. They also discourage unnecessary absence. The UK’s Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD⁴) describes them as one of the most effective **absence-management tools**⁵, particularly for tackling repeated short-term sickness.

¹ fitness to return 'fitnəs tə rɪ'tɜːn

gotowość do powrotu do pracy

² ongoing health concern 'ɒŋgəʊŋ helθ kən'sɜːn

trwające problemy zdrowotne

³ workplace support 'wɜːkpleɪs sə'pɔːt

wsparcie w miejscu pracy

⁴ CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) siː aɪ piː diː, 'tʃɑːtəd 'ɪnstɪtjuːt ɒv 'pɜːsə'nəl ænd dɪ'veləpmənt

międzynarodowa organizacja certyfikująca specjalistów od HR

⁵ absence-management tool 'æbsəns 'mænɪdʒmənt tuːl

narzędzie do zarządzania absencją

INFOBOX

Presenteeism

Presenteeism occurs when employees come to work despite being ill and are unable to perform at their best. While it may reduce recorded absence, it can lower productivity, **prolong**¹ **recovery**² and **spread**³ **infectious illnesses**⁴ to colleagues. According to the CIPD’s Health and Wellbeing at Work survey, presenteeism is reported by most UK employers and considered a greater **hidden cost**⁵ than sickness absence itself.

¹ to prolong sth tə prə'loŋ 'sʌmθɪŋ

przedłużyć coś

² recovery rɪ'kʌvəri

powrót do zdrowia

³ to spread sth to sb tə spred 'sʌmθɪŋ tə

'sʌmbədɪ tuː przekazywać coś komuś,

zarażać kogoś

⁴ infectious illness ɪn'fekʃəs 'ɪlnəs

choroba zakaźna

⁵ hidden cost 'hɪdn kɒst

ukryty koszt

INFOBOX



⁷¹ draconian drə'kæʊniən drakoński

⁷² counterproductive ˌkaʊntəprə'dʌktɪv

przynoszący skutek odwrotny do zamierzonego

⁷³ presenteeism ˌprezən'tiːzəm prezenteizm,

przychodzenie do pracy mimo choroby

⁷⁴ unconditional trust ˌʌnkən'dɪʃənl trʌst

bezwarunkowe zaufanie

⁷⁵ to exploit tə ɪk'splɔɪt wykorzystywać,

nadużywać

⁷⁶ absence management 'æbsəns 'mænɪdʒmənt

zarządzanie absencją

⁷⁷ package of measures 'pækɪdʒ ɒv 'meʒəz

pakiet środków

⁷⁸ data analysis 'deɪtə ə'næləsɪs analiza danych

⁷⁹ root cause ruːt kɔːz główna przyczyna

⁸⁰ to design sth out tə dɪ'zaɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ aʊt
wyeliminować coś poprzez odpowiednie
zaprojektowanie systemu

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

to shed light on sth
/tə ʃed laɪt ɒn
'sʌmθɪŋ/
rzucić światło na coś,
wyjaśniać coś

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Deadly¹ Flowers, Life-Saving Medicine

They've earned a fearsome reputation, but two of the world's most toxic plants may hold the key to more **efficacious**² medical treatments. Step into the lab with BEM's Jonathan Sidor to see how scientists are unlocking these flowers' remarkable chemistry.

Plants have always been a **double-edged sword**³ for us humans. The same chemicals that defend them against insects and hungry animals – and make them toxic – have repeatedly become some of humanity's most valuable medicines. Aspirin **traces its origins to**⁴ willow bark, morphine comes from poppies, and quinine was discovered in cinchona trees. Now, researchers believe two **notorious**⁵ poisonous plants could join that list.

If Looks Could Kill

At first glance, neither **larkspur**⁶ nor **wolfsbane**⁷ looks particularly threatening. The former produces elegant **spikes**⁸ of **vivid**⁹ blue and purple flowers that brighten gardens across Europe and North America.

Wolfsbane, also called **monkshood**¹⁰ because its flowers **resemble**¹¹ the hood of a medieval monk, is equally striking. Beneath that beauty, however, lies a **formidable**¹² chemical arsenal.

These plants **manufacture**¹³ a family of substances known as **diterpenoid alkaloids**¹⁴, compounds so **potent**¹⁵ that even tiny amounts can **interfere with**¹⁶ the nervous system, causing **paralysis**¹⁷, **irregular heart rhythms**¹⁸, or even death. For centuries, wolfsbane was used to **poison**¹⁹ the tips of arrows and **spears**²⁰, while wild larkspur continues to **plague**²¹ and poison **grazing cattle**²² in parts of North America. The very **etymology**²³ of wolfsbane, which literally means "wolf killer," is based on the ancient practice of mixing the plant's toxic juices with meat to kill off pest wolves.

Yet **toxicity**²⁴ is only half the story. Scientists have known for years that some members of this chemical family also **possess**²⁵ extraordinary medicinal properties. Different compounds show promise in **pain management**²⁶, malaria treatment, cancer research and environmentally friendly **pest control**²⁷. That said, researchers' latest **breakthrough**²⁸ doesn't involve

- ⁵ **notorious** *na'tɔ:riəs* okryty złą sławą
- ⁶ **larkspur** *'lɑ:kspɜ:* ostróżka (roślina trująca)
- ⁷ **wolfsbane** *'wɒlfzbeɪn* tojad (roślina trująca, nazywana też monkshood)
- ⁸ **spike** *spaɪk* *tu:* kłos, kwiatostan
- ⁹ **vivid** *'vɪvɪd* żywy, intensywny (o kolorach)
- ¹⁰ **monkshood** *'mʌŋkʃʊd* tojad (nazwa rośliny związana z kształtem kwiatu przypominającym kaptur mnicha)
- ¹¹ **to resemble sth** *tə rɪ'zembəl 'sʌmθɪŋ* przypominać coś
- ¹² **formidable** *'fɔ:mɪdəbl* potężny, budzący grozę
- ¹³ **to manufacture sth** *tə ,mænjʊ'fæktʃə 'sʌmθɪŋ* *tu:* wytwarzać coś
- ¹⁴ **diterpenoid alkaloids** *daɪ'tɜ:pənɔɪd 'ælkəlɔɪdz* alkaloidy diterpenoidowe (grupa związków chemicznych)
- ¹⁵ **potent** *'pəʊnt* silnie działający, potężny
- ¹⁶ **to interfere with sth** *tə ,ɪntə'fɪə wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ* zakłócać coś, ingerować w coś
- ¹⁷ **paralysis** *pə'æləsɪs* paraliż
- ¹⁸ **irregular heart rhythms** *ɪ'regjʊlə ha:t 'rɪðmz* zaburzenia rytmu serca
- ¹⁹ **to poison sth** *tə 'pɔɪzn 'sʌmθɪŋ* zatrąwać, zatruci coś
- ²⁰ **spear** *spɪə* włócznia
- ²¹ **to plague sb/sth** *tə pleɪg 'sʌmbədi 'sʌmθɪŋ* nękać, dreczyć kogoś/coś
- ²² **grazing cattle** *'greɪzɪŋ 'kætl* pasące się bydło
- ²³ **etymology** *'etɪ'mɒlədʒɪ* etymologia
- ²⁴ **toxicity** *tɒk'sɪsəti* toksyczność
- ²⁵ **to possess sth** *tə pə'zəs 'sʌmθɪŋ* posiadać coś
- ²⁶ **pain management** *peɪn 'mænɪdʒmənt* leczenie bólu, zwalczanie bólu
- ²⁷ **pest control** *pest kən'trɒl* zwalczanie szkodników
- ²⁸ **breakthrough** *'breɪkθru:* przełom, punkt zwrotny

¹ **deadly** *'dedli* śmiertelny

² **efficacious** *,efɪ'keɪʃəs* skuteczny, efektywny (o lekach i terapiach)

³ **double-edged sword** *,dʌbl edʒd 'sɔ:d* obosieczny miecz, coś mającego dobre i złe strony

⁴ **to trace one's origins to sth** *tə treɪs wʌnz 'ɔrɪdʒɪnz tə 'sʌmθɪŋ* wywodzić się z czegoś, mieć swoje źródła w czymś

discovering a new drug. Instead, it **sheds light on**²⁹ how these plants manufacture these **convoluted**³⁰ chemicals, opening the door to producing them in laboratories rather than **harvesting**³¹ **minute amounts**³² from nature.

Nature's Master Chemists

One reason wolfsbane's and larkspur's **hazardous**³³ compounds have remained so mysterious is their **staggering**³⁴ complexity. Take **aconitine**³⁵, one of the best-known toxins found in wolfsbane. Chemists first isolated it nearly two centuries ago, yet they still can't reliably build it **from scratch**³⁶. Its **molecular structure**³⁷ contains an **intricate**³⁸ arrangement of **interconnected**³⁹ rings and precisely positioned atoms that make laboratory **synthesis**⁴⁰ exceptionally difficult.

In contrast, the plants **assemble**⁴¹ these molecules with astonishing ease. Over millions of years, they have evolved **enzymes**⁴² that **function like**⁴³ microscopic factory workers. Each enzyme performs one specific task before passing the growing molecule to the next station along an invisible production line. Scientists often describe this process as a **biochemical**⁴⁴ **assembly line**⁴⁵, and understanding this process has become one of modern plant science's biggest **conundrums**⁴⁶.

Following Nature's Recipe⁴⁷

Researchers from Michigan State University and the Czech Academy of Sciences decided to **tackle**⁴⁸ the problem from an **atypical**⁴⁹ angle. Instead of attempting to recreate these molecules through conventional chemistry, they asked a simpler question: how do the plants make them in the first place?

To find the answer, the team examined thousands of **genes**⁵⁰ in both wolfsbane and larkspur. They specifically searched for those that became active while the plants produced their toxic compounds. After **narrowing**⁵¹ the list, they **transferred**⁵²

promising genes into **tobacco plants**⁵³, which acted as living labs.

In a **nutshell**⁵⁴, the experiment worked. The **modified**⁵⁵ tobacco plants successfully **reproduced**⁵⁶ the first six stages of the chemical **pathway**⁵⁷, producing a compound called atisinium. Along the way, scientists identified half a dozen key enzymes that **guide**⁵⁸ the whole process, including one unlike anything previously described. They also discovered an unexpected source of **nitrogen**⁵⁹, an essential ingredient in these powerful molecules.

While this doesn't mean researchers can suddenly manufacture the plants' healing compounds just yet, they've **uncovered**⁶⁰ the opening chapters of a recipe that has **puzzled**⁶¹ the scientific community for decades.

Medical Momentum⁶²

Finding the recipe may ultimately prove more valuable than finding the **finished product**⁶³. Plants produce these compounds slowly and in **infinitesimal**⁶⁴ quantities, making them **tricky**⁶⁵ and **pricey**⁶⁶ to **extract**⁶⁷. A single **batch**⁶⁸ may generate only tiny amounts over an entire **growing season**⁶⁹, **severely**⁷⁰ limiting medical research.

Now, scientists can imagine moving the plants' **genetic instructions**⁷¹ into

połączony, powiązany

⁴⁰ **synthesis** 'sɪnθəˌsɪs **synteza** (*tu*: chemiczna)

⁴¹ **to assemble sth** tə əˈsɛmbəl 'sʌmθɪŋ **montować, składać coś, tu: tworzyć częściki**

⁴² **enzyme** 'enzaim **enzym**

⁴³ **to function like sth** tə 'fʌŋkʃən laɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ **funkcjonować jako coś, pełnić rolę czegoś**

⁴⁴ **biochemical** ,baɪəʊˈkemɪkl **biochemiczny**

⁴⁵ **assembly line** əˈsɛmbli laɪn **linia montażowa**

⁴⁶ **conundrum** kəˈnʌndrəm **zagadka, problem trudny do rozwiązania**

⁴⁷ **recipe** 'resəpi **przepis, receptura, tu: sposób wytwarzania substancji**

⁴⁸ **to tackle sth** tə 'tækl 'sʌmθɪŋ **zająć się czymś, zmierzyć się z czymś**

⁴⁹ **atypical** ,etɪˈpɪkl **nietypowy**

⁵⁰ **gene** dʒiːn **gen**

⁵¹ **to narrow sth** tə 'nærəʊ 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: zawęzić coś (np. listę)**

⁵² **to transfer sth** tə trænˈsɜːf 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: przenieść, przeszczepić coś (np. geny)**

⁵³ **tobacco plant** təˈbækəʊ plɑːnts **tytoń (roślina)**

⁵⁴ **in a nutshell** ɪn ə 'nʌtʃl **krótko mówiąc, w skrócie**

⁵⁵ **modified** 'mɒdɪfaɪd **zmodyfikowany**

⁵⁶ **to reproduce sth** tə ,rɪˈprɒdjuːs 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: odtwarzać, reprodukować coś (np. proces chemiczny)**

⁵⁷ **pathway** 'pɑːθweɪ **tu: szlak (np. metaboliczny, biochemiczny)**

⁵⁸ **to guide sth** tə gaɪd 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: kierować, sterować czymś**

⁵⁹ **nitrogen** 'naɪtrədʒən **azot**

⁶⁰ **to uncover sth** tə ʌnˈkʌvə 'sʌmθɪŋ **odkryć, ujawnić coś**

⁶¹ **to puzzle sb** tə 'pʌzl 'sʌmbədi **stanowić zagadkę dla kogoś, nurtować kogoś**

⁶² **momentum** məˈmentəm **tu: impet, rozpęd (np. postęp w badaniach medycznych)**

⁶³ **finished product** 'fɪnɪʃt 'prɒdʌkt **produkt końcowy, gotowy produkt**

⁶⁴ **infinitesimal** ,ɪnfɪniˈtesɪml **nieskończenie mały, znikomy**

⁶⁵ **tricky** 'trɪki **trudny, kłopotliwy**

⁶⁶ **pricey** 'praɪsi **drogi, kosztowny**

⁶⁷ **to extract sth** tə ɪkˈstrækt 'sʌmθɪŋ **wydobywać, ekstrahować coś**

⁶⁸ **batch** bætf **partia, seria**

⁶⁹ **growing season** 'grəʊɪŋ 'siːzn **sezon wegetacyjny**

⁷⁰ **severely** sɪˈvɪəli **poważnie, dotkliwie**

⁷¹ **genetic instructions** dʒəˈnetɪk ɪnˈstrʌkʃnz **instrukcje genetyczne, informacja genetyczna**

²⁹ **to shed light on sth** tə ʃed laɪt ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ **rzucić światło na coś, wyjaśniać coś**

³⁰ **convoluted** ˈkɒnvəlʊːtɪd **zawiły, skomplikowany**

³¹ **to harvest sth** tə 'hɑːvɪst 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: zbierać coś, pozyskiwać coś (tu: substancje z roślin)**

³² **minute amounts** maɪˈnjuːt əˈmaʊnts **minimalne ilości**

³³ **hazardous** 'hæzədəs **niebezpieczny**

³⁴ **staggering** 'stægərɪŋ **zdumiewający, oszałamiający**

³⁵ **aconitine** əˈkɒnɪːn **akonityna (toksyczna substancja zawarta w tojadzie)**

³⁶ **from scratch** frəm skrætʃ **od podstaw, od zera**

³⁷ **molecular structure** məˈlekjʊlə 'strʌktʃə **struktura cząsteczkowa, budowa cząsteczki**

³⁸ **intricate** ˈɪntrɪkət **skomplikowany, zawiły**

³⁹ **interconnected** ˌɪntəkəˈnektɪd **wzajemnie**

PLANTS PRODUCE THESE COMPOUNDS SLOWLY AND IN INFINITESIMAL QUANTITIES, MAKING THEM TRICKY AND PRICEY TO EXTRACT.

organisms that are much easier to **cultivate**⁷², such as **yeast**⁷³. Rather than relying on fields of poisonous flowers, researchers could **transform**⁷⁴ cells in more common crops into **biological factories**⁷⁵ capable of **yielding**⁷⁶ much larger amounts under carefully controlled conditions.

Such a shift would dramatically **accelerate**⁷⁷ research. Scientists could investigate how these compounds attack malaria parasites, **alleviate**⁷⁸ pain, or interfere with **cancer cells**⁷⁹ without repeatedly returning to **scarce**⁸⁰ plant material. Just as importantly, they could begin **modifying**⁸¹ the molecules themselves, **preserving**⁸² the features that make them medically useful while reducing those responsible for their dangerous **side effects**⁸³.

Poison Or Cure?

The discovery also highlights one of medicine's oldest **paradoxes**⁸⁴: the difference between a poison and a treatment often comes down to **dose**⁸⁵. Many familiar medicines **originated as**⁸⁶ toxic substances. **Foxglove**⁸⁷, for instance, produces compounds that became **vital**⁸⁸ **heart medications**⁸⁹. **Botulinum toxin**⁹⁰, one of the most **lethal**⁹¹ substances known, is used in **cosmetic procedures**⁹² and to treat conditions like **chronic migraines**⁹³, **muscle spasms**⁹⁴, and certain **eye disorders**⁹⁵. Even **chemotherapy drugs**⁹⁶ frequently work because they're poisonous enough to kill **rapidly dividing**⁹⁷ cancer cells before harming healthy tissue.

Wolfsbane and larkspur belong to that same complicated tradition. The chemistry of both plants evolved as a defence against

predators⁹⁸, but evolution has no reason to **distinguish**⁹⁹ harmful molecules from potentially beneficial ones. Both emerged together, hidden within the same chemical **toolkit**¹⁰⁰. Researchers hope that by **comprehending**¹⁰¹ how these compounds are assembled, they can eventually isolate their **therapeutic potential**¹⁰² while leaving much of the danger behind.

A Breakthrough, Not A Miracle

Despite the **buzz**¹⁰³, this research represents the start of a much longer journey. Scientists still need much more knowledge before they can recreate the most medically valuable compounds **from A to Z**¹⁰⁴. Any future medicines would also require years of laboratory testing, **clinical trials**¹⁰⁵ and **regulatory approval**¹⁰⁶ before reaching patients.

Still, researchers see the breakthrough as a crucial **milestone**¹⁰⁷. The flowers themselves may never lose their deadly reputation, but hidden beneath their vivid **petals**¹⁰⁸ lies something equally spectacular: a collection of **molecular blueprints**¹⁰⁹ that could one day inspire an entirely new generation of treatments.

⁷² to cultivate sth *tə 'kʌltɪveɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ*
uprawiać, hodować coś

⁷³ yeast *ji:st* drożdże

⁷⁴ to transform sth into sth *tə trʌns'fɔ:m 'sʌmθɪŋ 'ɪntə 'sʌmθɪŋ*
przekształcać coś w coś

⁷⁵ biological factory *'baɪə'lɒdʒɪkl 'fæktəri* fabryka biologiczna
(komórka lub organizm wytwarzający pożądane substancje)

⁷⁶ to yield sth *tə ji:ld 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:*
dawać, produkować coś (np. związki chemiczne)

⁷⁷ to accelerate sth *tə ək'seləreɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ* przyspieszyć coś

⁷⁸ to alleviate sth *tə ə'li:vɪet 'sʌmθɪŋ* łagodzić, zmniejszać coś (np. ból)

⁷⁹ cancer cells *'kænsə selz* komórki nowotworowe

⁸⁰ scarce *skeəs* rzadki, trudno dostępny

⁸¹ to modify sth *tə 'mɒdɪfaɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ*
modyfikować coś

⁸² to preserve sth *tə prɪ'zɜ:v 'sʌmθɪŋ* zachować, utrzymać coś

⁸³ side effects *sɑɪd ɪ'fektz* skutki uboczne, działania niepożądane

⁸⁴ paradox *'pærədɒks* paradoks

⁸⁵ dose *dəʊs* dawka

⁸⁶ to originate as sth *tə ə'ɒrɪdʒɪneɪt əz 'sʌmθɪŋ*
powstawać jako coś, zaczynać funkcjonować jako coś

⁸⁷ foxglove *'fɒksɡlʌv* naparstnica (roślina lecznicza)

⁸⁸ vital *'vaɪtəl* niezbędny, kluczowy

⁸⁹ heart medication *hɑ:t 'medɪ'keɪʃn* leki kardiologiczne, leki na serce

⁹⁰ botulinum toxin *'bɒtjʊ'lɪnəm 'tɒksɪn* toksyna botulinowa

⁹¹ lethal *'li:θəl* śmiertelny

⁹² cosmetic procedures *kɒz'metɪk prə'sɪ:dʒəz* zabiegi kosmetyczne

⁹³ chronic migraine *'kronɪk 'maɪɡreɪn* przewlekła migrena

⁹⁴ muscle spasms *'mʌsl 'spæzəmz* skurcze mięśni

⁹⁵ eye disorders *aɪ dɪs'ɔ:dəz* schorzenia oczu

⁹⁶ chemotherapy drugs *'ki:məʊ'therəpi drʌgz* leki chemioterapeutyczne

⁹⁷ rapidly dividing *'ræpɪdli dɪ'vaɪdɪŋ* szybko dzielące się (np. o komórkach)

⁹⁸ predator *'predətə* drapieżnik

⁹⁹ to distinguish sth from sth *tə dɪ'stɪŋɡwɪʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ frɒm 'sʌmθɪŋ* odróżniać coś od czegoś

¹⁰⁰ toolkit *'tu:lɪkt* zestaw narzędzi, tu: zestaw środków chemicznych

¹⁰¹ to comprehend sth *tə kəm'prɪ'hend 'sʌmθɪŋ* rozumieć, pojmować coś

¹⁰² therapeutic potential *'θerə'pi:ʃnəl pə'tenʃl* potencjał terapeutyczny

¹⁰³ buzz *bʌz* tu: szum, zamieszanie medialne

¹⁰⁴ from A to Z *frɒm eɪ tə zed* od A do Z, w całości

¹⁰⁵ clinical trial *'klɪnɪkl 'traɪəl* badanie kliniczne

¹⁰⁶ regulatory approval *'regjʊlətəri ə'pru:vəl* zgoda organów regulacyjnych, akceptacja regulacyjna

¹⁰⁷ milestone *'maɪlstəʊn* kamień milowy, ważny etap

¹⁰⁸ petal *'petl* płatek (kwiatu)

¹⁰⁹ molecular blueprint *mə'lekjʊlə 'blu:prɪnt* plan molekularny, wzorzec cząsteczkowy





Can Tech Stand¹ the Heat?

It's been another **scorching**² summer with record highs, but it's not just people who have been feeling the heat. Many essential technologies have **struggled to**³ **cope**⁴. Can tech **futureproof** itself **against**⁵ a hotter world?

¹ to stand sth *tə stænd 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* wytrzymać coś

² scorching *'skɔ:tʃɪŋ* upalny, skwarny

³ to struggle to do sth *tə 'strʌgl tə du: 'sʌmθɪŋ* zмагаć się, żeby coś zrobić

⁴ to cope *tə kəʊp tu:* dać radę

⁵ to futureproof oneself against sth *tə 'fju:tʃəpru:f wʌn'self ə'genst 'sʌmθɪŋ* uodpornić się na przyszłe zmiany; zagwarantować, że coś długo nie wyjdzie z użycia (np. nawet gdy powstaną kolejne nowe technologie)



When people think about extreme heat, they tend to picture crowded beaches, parched⁶ gardens and overworked air conditioners. Yet behind the scenes, another challenge is rapidly emerging. The digital systems that power modern economies are also feeling the strain⁷.

The summer of 2026 offered a glimpse of what the future may hold. Temperatures climbed above 40°C across large parts of the UK and mainland Europe, pushing infrastructure far beyond the conditions it was originally⁸ designed to handle. For example:

East Surrey Hospital, UK, declared a critical incident⁹ and restricted treatment to life-threatening¹⁰ emergencies because the heat drove a surge in¹¹ patients.

Doctors across England reported MRI scanners¹², radiotherapy machines, cooling units and hospital IT systems failing or slowing because of the extreme temperatures.

The Golfech Nuclear Power Station in France temporarily shut down¹³ one reactor¹⁴ because river water used for cooling had become too warm.

Britain's electricity operator (NESO) issued¹⁵ emergency warnings that the grid¹⁶ was under exceptional¹⁷ pressure and called

for extra generation¹⁸ to avoid shortages¹⁹ as demand for²⁰ cooling surged²¹.

More than 1,000 UK schools closed fully or partially because buildings became too hot to use safely.

Most meteorologists agree that recent extremely high temperatures are not freak²² weather events but part of a climate-change pattern, in which it will only get hotter.

Heat: The Hidden Enemy of Technology

Like humans, computers need to regulate their temperature to function reliably. Every processor, memory chip²³ and power component generates heat, and removing that heat requires energy.

We assume digital technology is immune to²⁴ the weather because so much of

⁶ parched pɑ:tft wypalony, wyschnięty

⁷ to feel the strain tə fi:l ðə streɪn odczuwać skutki, cierpieć z powodu przeciążenia

⁸ originally ə'ri:dʒɪnəli początkowo, pierwotnie

⁹ to declare a critical incident tə dɪ'kleə ə 'krɪtɪkəl 'ɪnsɪdənt ogłosić stan krytyczny

¹⁰ life-threatening 'laɪf, θretnɪŋ zagrażający życiu

¹¹ to drive a surge in X tə draɪv ə sɜ:dʒ ɪn eks spowodować gwałtowny wzrost X

¹² MRI scanner em ɑ:(r) aɪ 'skænə skaner rezonansu magnetycznego

¹³ to shut down tə ʃʌt daʊn wyłączyć, zamknąć

¹⁴ reactor rɪ'æktə reaktor

¹⁵ to issue sth tə 'ɪʃu: 'sʌmθɪŋ wydać, wystosować coś (np. komunikat)

¹⁶ grid grɪd tu: sieć energetyczna

¹⁷ exceptional ɪk'sepʃənəl wyjątkowy, nadzwyczajny

¹⁸ generation ˌdʒenə'reɪʃən tu: wytwarzanie, produkcja energii

¹⁹ shortage 'ʃɔ:tɪdʒ niedobór, brak

²⁰ demand for sth dɪ'mɑ:nd fə 'sʌmθɪŋ popyt, zapotrzebowanie na coś

²¹ to surge tə sɜ:dʒ gwałtownie wzrosnąć

²² freak frɪ:k tu: nietypowy, anomalny

²³ memory chip 'meməri tʃɪp układ pamięci, czip pamięci

²⁴ immune to sth ɪ'mju:n tə 'sʌmθɪŋ odporny na coś

it is invisible. We stream films, hold online meetings and ask AI-assistants complex questions without considering the **warehouses**²⁵ of servers that make those services possible. In fact, those **data centres**²⁶ are among the world's most **temperature-sensitive**²⁷ facilities.

Servers performing billions of **calculations**²⁸ every second produce significant heat. Sophisticated cooling systems constantly circulate **chilled**²⁹ air or liquid around the equipment. Even a modest rise in **ambient temperature**³⁰ forces those systems to work considerably harder. This results in higher electricity consumption and a greater risk of **equipment failure**³¹.

When the Grid Gets Too Hot

Ironically, one of the first **casualties**³² of extreme temperatures can be the very electricity networks that digital technology depends upon. **Power stations**³³, **substations**³⁴ and **transmission equipment**³⁵ all have **thermal**³⁶ **operating limits**³⁷. **Transformers**³⁸ become less efficient as temperatures rise, while electricity **cables**³⁹ lose some of their **carrying capacity**⁴⁰ because **resistance**⁴¹ increases with heat.

Cooling systems at **generating stations**⁴² also face difficulties. Many rely on rivers or **reservoirs**⁴³ to remove excess heat. During **prolonged**⁴⁴ **hot spells**⁴⁵, **water levels**⁴⁶ can fall significantly while water temperatures rise, reducing cooling efficiency just as electricity demand surges. The timing could hardly be worse.

Heatwaves⁴⁷ trigger huge demand for **air conditioning**⁴⁸, **refrigeration**⁴⁹ and cooling equipment. Electricity consumption **goes through the roof**⁵⁰ just when generation and transmission become more difficult. The consequences can be **rolling blackouts**⁵¹ or temporary restrictions to prevent wider **network failures**⁵². For businesses operating **around the clock**⁵³, even brief interruptions can have expensive consequences.

²⁵ warehouse 'weəhaʊs magazyn, hala

²⁶ data centre 'dæʔə ,sentə centrum przetwarzania danych

WE ASSUME DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IS IMMUNE TO THE WEATHER BECAUSE SO MUCH OF IT IS INVISIBLE.

AI Needs More Than Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is often viewed as the solution to all of these problems. It can optimise logistics, predict equipment failures, assist medical diagnosis and **balance**⁵⁴ electricity demand across national grids.

Yet, as AI adoption expands across finance, manufacturing, healthcare and public services, demand for **computing capacity**⁵⁵ continues to grow. Traditional air conditioning may be inadequate for the new temperature norms.

Some operators are investing in more advanced cooling technologies. **Liquid cooling**⁵⁶ systems **transfer**⁵⁷ heat away

²⁷ temperature-sensitive 'tempərətʃə 'sensətɪv

wrażliwy na temperaturę

²⁸ calculation ,kælkju'leɪʃən obliczenie

²⁹ chilled tʃɪld schłodzony

³⁰ ambient temperature 'æmbɪənt 'tempərətʃə temperatura otoczenia

³¹ equipment failure 'ɪkwɪpmənt 'feɪljə awaria sprzętu

³² casualty 'kæʒuəlɪ ofiara

³³ power station 'paʊə ,steɪʃən elektrownia

³⁴ substation 'sʌbsteɪʃən podstacja, stacja transformatorowa

³⁵ transmission equipment trænʒ'mɪʃən 'ɪkwɪpmənt urządzenia przesyłowe

³⁶ thermal 'θɜ:məl cieplny, termiczny

³⁷ operating limit 'ɒpəreɪtɪŋ 'lɪmɪt limit pracy, próg eksploatacyjny

³⁸ transformer trænʒ'fɔ:mə transformator

³⁹ cable 'keɪbl kabel

⁴⁰ carrying capacity 'kæərɪŋ kə'pæsəti tu: zdolność przesyłowa

⁴¹ resistance rɪ'zɪstəns tu: opór, rezystancja

⁴² generating station 'dʒenəreɪtɪŋ ,steɪʃən elektrownia



⁴³ reservoir 'rezəvwa: zbiornik wodny

⁴⁴ prolonged prə'lonɪd przedłużający się

⁴⁵ hot spell hot spel fala upałów

⁴⁶ water level 'wɔ:tə ,levəl poziom wody

⁴⁷ heatwave 'hi:tweɪv fala upałów

⁴⁸ air conditioning 'eə kən,dɪfənɪŋ klimatyzacja

⁴⁹ refrigeration rɪ'frɪdʒə'reɪʃən chłodzenie, chłodnictwo

⁵⁰ to go through the roof tə ɡəʊ θru: ðə ru:f gwałtownie wzrosnąć, skoczyć w górę

⁵¹ rolling blackout 'rɒlɪŋ 'blækaʊt rotacyjne przerwy w dostawie prądu

⁵² network failure 'netwɜ:k 'feɪljə awaria sieci

⁵³ around the clock ə'raʊnd ðə 'klɒk przez całą dobę, non stop

⁵⁴ to balance tə 'bæləns tu: równoważyć

⁵⁵ computing capacity kəm'pjʊ:tɪŋ kə'pæsəti moc obliczeniowa

⁵⁶ liquid cooling 'lɪkwɪd 'ku:lɪŋ chłodzenie cieczą

⁵⁷ to transfer tə trænʒ'fɜ: tu: przemieścić, przekazywać



far more efficiently than air alone, while some facilities **immerse**⁵⁸ computer **components**⁵⁹ directly in specially **engineered**⁶⁰ **cooling fluids**⁶¹.

Others are experimenting with **underground**⁶² construction, **seawater cooling**⁶³ or locating facilities in naturally cooler climates. The race is no longer simply about more **processing power**⁶⁴; it is increasingly about **thermal management**⁶⁵.

⁵⁸ to immerse ʈə ɪ'mɜːs zanurzyć

⁵⁹ component kəm'pəʊnənt komponent, element

⁶⁰ engineered ˌendʒɪ'niəd specjalnie zaprojektowany

⁶¹ cooling fluid 'kuːlɪŋ 'fluːɪd płyn chłodzący

⁶² underground ˌʌndə'graʊnd pod ziemią, podziemny

⁶³ seawater cooling 'siːwɔːtə 'kuːlɪŋ chłodzenie wodą morską

Hospitals Cannot Simply Reboot⁶⁶

Healthcare increasingly depends on digital infrastructure. **Patient records**⁶⁷, **diagnostic imaging**⁶⁸, laboratory equipment, medicine **dispensing systems**⁶⁹ and communication networks all rely on **uninterrupted**⁷⁰ computing.

⁶⁴ processing power 'prəʊsesɪŋ 'paʊə moc obliczeniowa

⁶⁵ thermal management 'θɜːməl 'mæɪnɪdʒmənt zarządzanie ciepłem

⁶⁶ to reboot tə ˌriː'bʊt zrestartować (się)

⁶⁷ patient record 'peɪʃənt 'rekɔːd dokumentacja medyczna pacjenta

⁶⁸ diagnostic imaging ˌdaɪəɡ'nɒstɪk 'ɪmɪdʒɪŋ obrazowanie diagnostyczne

⁶⁹ dispensing system dɪ'spensɪŋ 'sɪstəm system wydawania, system dozowania

Hospitals already maintain emergency generators for power failures, but prolonged heat presents additional risks. **Backup equipment**⁷¹ also requires cooling, while **medical imaging devices**⁷² such as MRI scanners generate substantial heat during normal operation. If cooling systems fail, hospitals may have to **postpone**⁷³ procedures, **relocate**⁷⁴ patients or reduce non-essential services.

Similar challenges affect almost every critical service:

- Airports – **check-in systems**⁷⁵, **baggage handling**⁷⁶, flight information displays, **security screening**⁷⁷, **passport control**⁷⁸, **air traffic management**⁷⁹ and aircraft **refuelling**⁸⁰ systems.
- Rail networks – **signalling systems**⁸¹, electronic **points**⁸², **ticketing machines**⁸³, passenger information displays, **control centres**⁸⁴ and communications between trains and operators.
- Emergency services – emergency call handling, **computer-aided dispatch**⁸⁵,

⁷⁰ uninterrupted ˌʌnɪntə'rʌptɪd nieprzerwany

⁷¹ backup equipment 'bækʌp ɪ'kwɪpmənt urządzenia zapasowe

⁷² medical imaging device 'medɪkəl 'ɪmɪdʒɪŋ dɪ'vaɪs urządzenie do obrazowania medycznego

⁷³ to postpone tə pəʊst'pəʊn odłożyć, przełożyć

⁷⁴ to relocate tə ˌriːləʊ'keɪt przenieść

⁷⁵ check-in system 'tʃek ɪn 'sɪstəm system odprawy

⁷⁶ baggage handling 'bæɡɪdʒ ˌhændlɪŋ obsługa bagażu

⁷⁷ security screening sɪ'kjʊərətɪ 'skriːnɪŋ kontrola bezpieczeństwa

⁷⁸ passport control 'pɑːspɔːt kən'trəʊl kontrola paszportowa

⁷⁹ air traffic management eə 'træfɪk 'mæɪnɪdʒmənt zarządzanie ruchem lotniczym

⁸⁰ refuelling ˌriː'fjuːəlɪŋ tankowanie

⁸¹ signalling system 'sɪɡnəlɪŋ 'sɪstəm system sygnalizacyjny

⁸² points pɔɪnts tuː zwrotnice

⁸³ ticketing machine 'tɪkɪtɪŋ mə'ʃiːn automat biletowy

⁸⁴ control centre kən'trəʊl ˌsentə centrum kontroli

⁸⁵ computer-aided dispatch kəm'pjʊːtər ˌeɪdɪd dɪ'spætʃ komputerowy system wysyłania (np. karetek)

vehicle tracking⁸⁶, radio communications, digital mapping and access to incident databases⁸⁷.

- Financial institutions – payment processing⁸⁸, cash machines⁸⁹ (ATMs⁹⁰), online banking, stock trading platforms⁹¹, fraud detection⁹² systems and interbank settlement⁹³ networks.
- Telecommunications providers – mobile phone masts⁹⁴, broadband exchanges⁹⁵, internet routing equipment⁹⁶, cloud services, emergency communications and network management centres.
- Power utilities – grid control rooms⁹⁷, smart grid systems⁹⁸, substation monitoring⁹⁹, electricity demand forecasting¹⁰⁰ and renewable energy¹⁰¹ management.

We have created numerous vulnerabilities¹⁰² through our dependence on digital systems. The potential consequences of an essential system overheating and shutting down could be catastrophic¹⁰³.

Building Smarter Infrastructure

Naturally, many experts are working feverishly¹⁰⁴ to resolve these risks. Manufacturers are designing processors that deliver greater performance while consuming less energy. New chip architectures¹⁰⁵ reduce heat production, extending¹⁰⁶ both efficiency and reliability.

AI can help technology manage its own environment through smart monitoring systems¹⁰⁷ that track¹⁰⁸ current temperature and energy use in real time¹⁰⁹. Rather than waiting for components to fail, predictive maintenance¹¹⁰ software identifies warning signs before breakdowns¹¹¹ occur.

Buildings are becoming more thermally efficient¹¹². Modern data centres increasingly feature reflective roofing¹¹³, improved insulation¹¹⁴ and carefully designed airflow¹¹⁵ systems. Some recover¹¹⁶ waste heat¹¹⁷ to warm nearby offices or residential developments¹¹⁸, improving overall¹¹⁹ energy efficiency¹²⁰.

Renewable energy also has an important role. Solar generation¹²¹ aligns naturally with¹²² periods of greatest cooling demand, while battery storage¹²³ can help smooth¹²⁴ electricity supplies during periods of extreme

pressure. Put together, these innovations improve¹²⁵ resilience¹²⁶.

Data Centres Move North

On the other hand¹²⁷, the answer might be not to fight heat but avoid it altogether. Historically, data centres were built close to major cities where demand was greatest. Increasingly, operators are moving data centres north, underground and underwater¹²⁸.

Meta runs a giant data centre in Luleå, Sweden. Verne operates a site at a former¹²⁹ NATO base near Keflavík Airport, Iceland. OpenAI is planning a large facility in Narvik, Norway, while Google uses seawater for cooling in Hamina, Finland. There are other centres in Svalbard and along the Arctic Circle¹³⁰.

In Greenland, the Gigawatt Proposal is a multi-billion-dollar project that aims to¹³¹

⁸⁶ vehicle tracking 'vi:ɪkəl 'trækiŋ śledzenie pojazdów

⁸⁷ incident database 'ɪnsɪdənt 'deɪtəbeɪs baza danych zdarzeń

⁸⁸ payment processing 'peɪmənt 'prəʊsesɪŋ przetwarzanie płatności

⁸⁹ cash machine kæʃ mə'ʃi:n bankomat

⁹⁰ ATM (automated teller machine) eɪ ti: em 'ɔ:təmətɪd 'telə mə'ʃi:n bankomat

⁹¹ stock trading platform stɒk 'treɪdɪŋ 'plætfɔ:m platforma handlu akcjami

⁹² fraud detection frɔ:d dɪ'tekʃən wykrywanie oszustw

⁹³ interbank settlement 'ɪntə'bæŋk 'setlmənt rozliczenia międzybankowe

⁹⁴ mobile phone mast 'məʊbaɪl fəʊn mɑ:st maszt telefonii komórkowej

⁹⁵ broadband exchange 'brɔ:dbænd ɪks'tʃeɪndʒ centrala szerokopasmowa

⁹⁶ internet routing equipment 'ɪntənət 'ru:tɪŋ 'ɪkwɪpmənt urządzenia routingu internetu

⁹⁷ grid control room grɪd kən'trəʊl ru:m centrum kontroli sieci

⁹⁸ smart grid smɑ:t grɪd inteligentna sieć energetyczna

⁹⁹ substation monitoring 'sʌbstetʃən 'mɒnɪtərɪŋ monitorowanie podstacji

¹⁰⁰ demand forecasting dɪ'mɑ:nd 'fɔ:kɑ:stɪŋ prognozowanie zapotrzebowania

¹⁰¹ renewable energy rɪ'nju:əbəl 'enədʒi energia

odnawialna

¹⁰² vulnerability ,vʌlnərə'bɪləti podatność, słaby punkt

¹⁰³ catastrophic ,kætə'strofɪk katastrofalny

¹⁰⁴ feverishly 'fi:vərɪʃli gorączkowo, intensywnie

¹⁰⁵ chip architecture tʃɪp 'ɑ:kɪtektʃə architektura układu scalonego

¹⁰⁶ to extend sth tə ɪk'stend 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: zwiększyć coś

¹⁰⁷ smart monitoring system smɑ:t 'mɒnɪtərɪŋ 'sɪstəm inteligentny system monitorowania

¹⁰⁸ to track sth tə træk 'sʌmθɪŋ śledzić, monitorować coś

¹⁰⁹ in real time ɪn ,ri:əl 'taɪm w czasie rzeczywistym

¹¹⁰ predictive maintenance prɪ'dɪktɪv 'meɪntənəns konserwacja predykcyjna

¹¹¹ breakdown 'breɪkdaʊn tu: awaria

¹¹² thermally efficient 'θɜ:məli 'ɪfjənt efektywny cieplnie

¹¹³ reflective roofing rɪ'fleksɪv 'ru:fɪŋ pokrycie dachowe odblaskowe

¹¹⁴ insulation ,ɪnsju'leɪʃən izolacja

¹¹⁵ airflow 'eəfləʊ przepływ powietrza

¹¹⁶ to recover sth tə rɪ'kʌvə 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: odzyskiwać coś

¹¹⁷ waste heat weɪst hi:t ciepło odpadowe

¹¹⁸ residential development ,rezi'denʃəl dɪ'veləpmənt osiedle mieszkaniowe, zabudowa mieszkaniowa

¹¹⁹ overall ,əʊvər'ɔ:l ogólny, całkowity

¹²⁰ energy efficiency 'enədʒi 'ɪfjənsi efektywność energetyczna

¹²¹ solar generation 'səʊlə ,dʒenə'reɪʃən wytwarzanie energii elektrycznej ze słońca

¹²² to align with sth tə ə'laɪn wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ pokrywać się, zgadzać się z czymś

¹²³ battery storage 'bætəri 'stɔ:rdʒ magazynowanie energii w bateriach

¹²⁴ to smooth sth tə smu:ð 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: wyrównać coś

¹²⁵ to improve sth tə ɪm'pru:v 'sʌmθɪŋ polepszać coś

¹²⁶ resilience rɪ'zɪliəns odporność

¹²⁷ on the other hand ɒn ði: 'ʌðə hænd z drugiej strony

¹²⁸ underwater ,ʌndə'wɔ:tə pod wodą

¹²⁹ former 'fɔ:mə były

¹³⁰ Arctic Circle ,ɑ:ktɪk 'sɜ:kl koło podbiegunowe północne

¹³¹ to aim to do sth tə eɪm tə du: 'sʌmθɪŋ mieć na celu zrobienie czegoś

build a massive AI data centre **campus**¹³² in the remote Kangerlussuaq region. The **key driver**¹³³ is **critical minerals extraction**¹³⁴ firm GreenMet, headed by Drew Horn, a former adviser to US Vice President Mike Pence during Trump's first term in office. This shows that the locating of important data centres is no longer just a logistics issue, but a **geopolitical gambit**¹³⁵.

It is also a business risk. **Climate resilience**¹³⁶ now sits alongside **cybersecurity**¹³⁷ and **financial planning**¹³⁸ in corporate **risk assessments**¹³⁹. Companies must ask whether critical systems, suppliers and **backup facilities**¹⁴⁰ can **withstand**¹⁴¹ prolonged heatwaves, while rising insurance costs add further pressure.

¹³⁸ **financial planning** *fai,nænʃəl 'plæniŋ*

planowanie finansowe

¹³⁹ **risk assessment** *risk ə'sesmənt* **ocena ryzyka**

¹⁴⁰ **backup facility** *'bækʌp fə'siləti* **obiekt**

zapasowy

¹⁴¹ **to withstand sth** *tə wið'stænd 'sʌmθiŋ*

wytrzymać, znieść coś

¹⁴² **icy** *'aɪsi* **lodowaty**

¹⁴³ **to roast** *tə rəʊst* **tu: piec się**



Designing for a Hotter World

Digital infrastructure was built for a more predictable climate. As temperatures rise, systems must cope with both growing demand for computing power and more frequent extreme heat.

This requires a new approach to design. Rather than preparing for occasional heatwaves, engineers may need to assume today's record temperatures will become tomorrow's norm. The future depends not only on faster processors and more powerful AI, but also on resilient infrastructure, smarter energy management and better cooling. Large data centres are already migrating north to **icy**¹⁴² environments. For the rest of us **roasting**¹⁴³ in 40°C, we are left hoping that the AC won't break down under pressure.

¹³² **campus** *'kæmpəs* **kampus**

¹³³ **key driver** *ki: 'draɪvə* **główny czynnik napędowy**

¹³⁴ **critical minerals extraction** *'krɪtɪkəl 'mɪnərəlz ɪk'strækʃən* **wydobycie kluczowych minerałów**

¹³⁵ **geopolitical gambit** *'dʒi:əpə'lɪtɪkəl 'gæmbɪt* **geopolityczny manewr, posunięcie geopolityczne**

¹³⁶ **climate resilience** *'klaɪmət rɪ'zɪliəns* **odporność klimatyczna**

¹³⁷ **cybersecurity** *'saɪbərsɪ'kjʊərəti* **cyberbezpieczeństwo**



CONDITIONALS UNDER PRESSURE

Choose the correct option from the table to complete each conditional sentence.

Use each option once.

A. fail B. will increase C. moved D. rise
E. would reduce F. would absorb G. will struggle H. adopt

1. If ambient temperatures _____ further, data centre cooling systems will have to work much harder.
2. Hospital IT systems and scanners may _____ if cooling units break down during a heatwave.
3. If energy grid operators _____ predictive maintenance AI, they will spot system failures before blackouts occur.
4. If companies _____ more data facilities to northern regions, they would lower their reliance on air conditioning.
5. Operating costs _____ sharply if electricity consumption goes through the roof during summer.
6. If engineers designed chips that generated less heat, it _____ overall power demand.
7. If critical infrastructure fails during extreme weather, essential public services _____ to function safely.
8. If data centres installed reflective roofing, their buildings _____ less heat from the sun.

BEM TEST

Answers: 1. D, 2. A, 3. H, 4. C, 5. B, 6. E, 7. G, 8. F

Finding Your Voice



by Paul Martin from
www.go-native.pl

Speaking confidently in English does not require a perfect accent, an impressive vocabulary or complete freedom from nerves. From presentations and conferences to everyday meetings, **Paul Martin** explores how preparation, clarity and purposeful practice can help multilingual professionals **find their voice**¹ – and **make sure**² that others hear it.

The Fear

Your name is called. You walk towards the front of the room and suddenly **become conscious of** everything: your hands, your breathing and the opening sentence that sounded perfectly natural at home. If English isn't your first language, another question **joins the crowd**⁴: is my English good enough?

Public speaking combines several **sources**⁵ of **anxiety**⁶. You're being observed, you can't predict every response and you have limited opportunities to correct mistakes. Using an additional language raises the mental demand further: ideas must be organised while vocabulary is **retrieved**⁷, sentences are formed and reactions are interpreted.

But confident speakers are not necessarily free from these pressures. More often, they have reduced the decisions they must make **in the moment**⁸ and know how to continue when something goes wrong.

¹ to find one's voice *tə faɪnd wʌnz vɔɪs* odważyć się mówić pewnie, *dosł.* znaleźć swój głos

Put the Nerves to Work

Matt Abrahams, who teaches strategic communication at Stanford University, describes anxiety as "a helpful **fuel**⁹". Pressure increases **alertness**¹⁰ and releases physical energy, both of which can support a speaker. The problem begins when these **sensations**¹¹ are interpreted as panic.

Research by Harvard psychologist Alison Wood Brooks suggests that

² to make sure *tə meɪk ʃʊː* upewnić się

³ to become conscious of sth *tə biˈkɒm ˈkɒnʃəs əv ˈsʌmθɪŋ* uświadomić sobie coś

⁴ to join the crowd *tə dʒɔɪn ðə kraʊd tuː* wyłaniać się, *dosł.* przyłączyć się do tłumu

⁵ source *sɔːs* źródło

⁶ anxiety *æŋˈzaɪəti* niepokój

⁷ retrieved *rɪˈtriːvd tuː* przywołany, odczukiwany w pamięci

⁸ in the moment *ɪn ðə ˈməʊmənt* w danej chwili, na miejscu

⁹ fuel *ˈfjuːəl* paliwo

¹⁰ alertness *əˈlɜːtnəs* czujność, gotowość

¹¹ sensation *senˈseɪʃn tuː* odczucie, wrażenie fizyczne

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING
let me put that another way /let mi: put ðæt əˈnʌðə weɪ/
inaczej mówiąc,
pozwolę sobie to ująć
inaczej



attempting to become completely calm may be the wrong objective. In experiments involving stressful activities, including public speaking, participants who **re-framed**¹² anxiety as excitement performed better than those who told themselves to remain calm. Anxiety and excitement are both states of **high arousal**¹³, so changing the meaning of that arousal may be more useful than trying to **suppress**¹⁴ it.

Before speaking, slow your **exhalation**¹⁵ and release tension from your shoulders, but do not wait to feel perfectly relaxed. Treat the faster **heartbeat**¹⁶ as preparation for action, then direct that energy into **voice projection**¹⁷, **emphasis**¹⁸ and **engagement**¹⁹. Your hands may still shake, but that doesn't need to prevent anyone from understanding your argument.

Direct Your Attention

An anxious speaker often attempts two tasks **simultaneously**²⁰. One part of the mind **delivers**²¹ the message; another **monitors**²² the performance: Was that **tense**²³ correct? Is my accent too strong? Why is that person looking at their watch?

¹² to reframe sth *tə ˈriːˈfreɪm ˈsʌmθɪŋ*
przeformułować coś, spojrzeć
na coś inaczej

¹³ high arousal *haɪ əˈraʊzəl* wysoki poziom
pobudzenia

¹⁴ to suppress sth *tə səˈpres ˈsʌmθɪŋ* stłumić,
zdusić coś

¹⁵ exhalation *ˌeksəˈleɪʃn* wydech

¹⁶ heartbeat *ˈhɑːtbiːt* bicie serca

¹⁷ voice projection *vɔɪs prəˈdʒekʃn*
nośność głosu, donośność

¹⁸ emphasis *ˈemfəsɪs* nacisk, emfaza

¹⁹ engagement *ɪnˈɡeɪdʒmənt tuː*
zaangażowanie, kontakt z widzami

²⁰ simultaneously *ˌsɪməlˈteɪniəsli*
jednocześnie

²¹ to deliver sth *tə dɪˈlɪvə ˈsʌmθɪŋ*
tuː przekazywać coś

²² to monitor sth *tə ˈmɒnɪtə ˈsʌmθɪŋ*
tuː kontrolować, nadzorować coś

²³ tense *tens* czas gramatyczny

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Signposting Phrases

Signposting phrases tell listeners where you are in your presentation and how one idea connects to the next. They make complex information easier to follow and help you regain your place without sounding uncertain. Basic versions are clear and dependable; the **levelled-up**¹ alternatives add greater **precision**² or a more **professional tone**³.

PURPOSE	BASIC VERSION	SLIGHT LEVEL-UP
Introducing the subject	"Today, I'm going to talk about..."	"I'd like to focus on..."
Explaining the structure	"There are three main points."	"I'll approach this from three angles."
Highlighting a key idea	"The main point is..."	"What matters most here is..."
Moving to a new point	"Let's move on to..."	"That brings us to..."
Giving an example	"For example..."	"A useful example of this is..."
Referring backwards	"As I said earlier..."	"This takes us back to the earlier point about..."
Clarifying an idea	"Let me explain that."	"To put that more precisely..."
Showing practical relevance	"What does this mean?"	"So, what does this mean in practice?"
Summarising	"To sum up..."	"The key takeaway is..."
Introducing action	"The next step is..."	"What I'm proposing, therefore, is..."

¹ levelled-up 'levld ʌp ulepszony

² precision 'pri:ʒɪn precyzja

³ professional tone prə'feʃənl təʊn

profesjonalny ton

INFOBOX

Psychologists David Clark and Adrian Wells identified this **self-focused attention**²⁴ as one process that can **maintain**²⁵ social anxiety. Speakers may treat their physical sensations and negative thoughts as evidence of how the audience sees them. Attention that could be used to explain an idea or **read the room**²⁶ is instead spent on **internal inspection**²⁷.

Give that attention an external target. TED **curator**²⁸ Chris Anderson describes a speaker's central task as **constructing**²⁹

an idea inside the minds of the audience. Presentation expert Nancy Duarte makes a similar point: "**The audience is the hero**³⁰." The speaker is the guide who helps listeners understand a problem, recognise a possibility or **reach a decision**³¹.

Focus on what the audience needs to understand, believe or do after listening. This does not mean ignoring your **delivery**³²; it means judging it by whether it **serves**³³ the listener and your message.

Aim for Intelligibility³⁴

For someone speaking an additional language, an **audience-centred**³⁵ goal is more useful than the **vague**³⁶ demand to "demonstrate excellent English". Decide what your listeners should understand. This will help you choose what to include, remove or explain further, and provides a more meaningful measure of success.

The same principle should shape how you speak. Many multilingual speakers worry about sounding sufficiently British or American, yet researchers Murray Munro and Tracey Derwing **distinguish between**³⁷ **accentedness**³⁸, **comprehensibility**³⁹ and intelligibility: how different speech sounds, how much effort it takes to follow and how much is understood.

²⁴ self-focused attention self 'fəʊkəst ə'tenʃn
uwaga skierowana na siebie

²⁵ to maintain sth tə meɪn'teɪn 'sʌməθɪŋ tu:
podtrzymywać coś

²⁶ to read the room tə ri:d ðə ru:m wyczuć
atmosferę, odczytać nastrój słuchaczy

²⁷ internal inspection ɪn'tɜːnl ɪn'spekʃn
wewnętrzna autoobserwacja

²⁸ curator kjuə'reɪtə kurator (osoba
odpowiedzialna za dobór treści)

²⁹ to construct sth tə kən'strʌkt 'sʌməθɪŋ
zbudować, stworzyć coś

³⁰ the audience is the hero ði 'ɔːdiəns ɪz ðə
'hɪərəʊ publiczność jest bohaterem

³¹ to reach a decision tə ri:tʃ ə dɪ'sɪʒn podjąć decyzję

³² delivery dɪ'lɪvəri tu: sposób prezentacji,
wykonanie

³³ to serve sb tə sɜːv 'sʌmbədɪ służyć komuś

³⁴ intelligibility ɪn,telɪdʒə'bɪləti zrozumiałość

³⁵ audience-centred 'ɔːdiəns 'sentəd
skoncentrowany na słuchacz

³⁶ vague veɪɡ niejasny, mglisty

³⁷ to distinguish between X and Y tə dɪ'stɪŋɡwɪʃ
br'twiːn eks ænd waɪ rozróżniać między X i Y

³⁸ accentedness 'æksəntɪdnəs różnica pomiędzy
akcentem osoby mówiącej w danym,
wyuczonym języku a akcentem używanym
przez rdzennych mieszkańców danego
regionu, sposób akcentowania

³⁹ comprehensibility ,kɒmpri'hensə'bɪləti
zrozumiałość, przejrzystość

Remember that a person may **retain**⁴⁰ a strong accent while remaining **highly intelligible**⁴¹ – and **vice versa**⁴².

The priority is not to **erase**⁴³ your accent but to help listeners understand you without unnecessary effort. Research highlights the importance of **prosody**⁴⁴: the rhythm, stress and intonation of speech. Emphasising key words, **pausing**⁴⁵ between ideas and **dividing** longer sentences **into**⁴⁶ meaningful groups can contribute more to understanding than perfecting every sound.

Slow down for names, figures and technical expressions, as listeners cannot always **reconstruct**⁴⁷ them from context. A missing **article**⁴⁸ (a, an or the) will rarely change the meaning; an unclear percentage might.

Rehearse the Task

Reading a presentation is not **rehearsing**⁴⁹ it. **Familiarity**⁵⁰ on the page can feel like **mastery**⁵¹, but speaking requires you to produce ideas aloud while **managing**⁵² time, slides, faces and **interruptions**⁵³.

Begin without the slides. Explain the subject until you can reach the central point in more than one **form of words**⁵⁴. Then add **brief notes**⁵⁵ and **visual material**⁵⁶. Record one version before presenting another to a **supportive**⁵⁷ listener.

Review recordings **selectively**⁵⁸. “I look awkward” is a **judgement**⁵⁹, not a useful **diagnosis**⁶⁰. Instead, **examine**⁶¹ the argument. Was my main **claim**⁶² clear? Did my



⁴⁰ to retain sth tə ri'tein 'sʌmθɪŋ zachować coś

⁴¹ highly intelligible 'haɪli ɪn'telɪdʒəbl bardzo zrozumiały

⁴² vice versa ,vaɪs 'vɜ:sə na odwrót, odwrotnie

⁴³ to erase sth tɔ 'i'reɪz 'sʌmθɪŋ wymazać, usunąć coś

⁴⁴ prosody 'prɒsədi prozodia (rytm, akcent i intonacja mowy)

⁴⁵ to pause tə paʊz robić pauzę, przerwać

⁴⁶ to divide sth into sth tə dɪ'vaɪd 'sʌmθɪŋ 'ɪntə 'sʌmθɪŋ podzielić coś na coś

⁴⁷ to reconstruct sth tə ,ri:kən'strʌkt 'sʌmθɪŋ odtworzyć, zrekonstruować coś

⁴⁸ article 'ɑ:tɪkl tu: rodzajnik

⁴⁹ to rehearse sth tə ri'hɜ:s 'sʌmθɪŋ ćwiczyć coś, robić próbę

⁵⁰ familiarity fə,mɪli'ærəti tu: znajomość

⁵¹ mastery 'mɑ:stəri opanowanie, biegłość; mistrzostwo

⁵² to manage sth tə 'mænɪdʒ 'sʌmθɪŋ panować nad czymś, radzić sobie z czymś

⁵³ interruption ,ɪntə'rʌpʃn przerwanie, wtrącenie

⁵⁴ form of words fɔ:m ɒv wɜ:dz sposób sformułowania

⁵⁵ brief notes brɪ:f nəʊts zwięzłe notatki

⁵⁶ visual material 'vɪʒʊəl mə'tɪəriəl materiał wizualny

⁵⁷ supportive sə'pɔ:tɪv wspierający, życzliwy

⁵⁸ selectively sɪ'lektɪvli selektywnie, wybiórczo

⁵⁹ judgement 'dʒʌdʒmənt tu: opinia, osąd

⁶⁰ diagnosis ,daɪəg'nəʊsɪs diagnoza

⁶¹ to examine sth tɔ ɪg'zæmɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ przeanalizować, zbadać coś

⁶² claim kleɪm tu: teza, twierdzenie

examples support it? Could a listener understand why each section was included? On another viewing, consider your **pacing**⁶³, stress and pauses. Try to make one specific **adjustment**⁶⁴ after each review.

Gradually increase the pressure. Stand up, use equipment, **run a timer**⁶⁵. If possible, ask someone to interrupt or question you. Practise **deliberately**⁶⁶ **losing your place**⁶⁷ and returning to your rhythm.

This resembles the principle behind **exposure-based treatments**⁶⁸ for anxiety. Repeated, **manageable**⁶⁹ contact with a feared situation can **weaken**⁷⁰ the expectation that it will be **intolerable**⁷¹. The lesson is not that nothing will go wrong, but that a pause, interruption or forgotten phrase need not make speech **collapse**⁷².

Manage the Language

Speaking becomes difficult when you try to organise your thoughts, find the right vocabulary and build each sentence simultaneously. Give yourself a simple **route**⁷³ through the idea. Imagine that you want to **recommend**⁷⁴ **delaying**⁷⁵ a **product launch**⁷⁶. Under pressure, you might say, “We still have some tests, and the technical team found two problems, and we need more time...”

The listener hears several details but must wait for your **main point**⁷⁷. State the recommendation first: “We should delay the launch because several important tests are still **incomplete**⁷⁸.” This uses a **dependable**⁷⁹ structure: main point + reason. You can then develop it in short, connected stages:

“We should delay the launch. The main reason is that several important tests are still incomplete. For example, the payment system has not been fully checked and we haven’t **verified**⁸⁰ **user logins**⁸¹. **As a result**⁸², launching now could create problems for customers.”

Phrases such as ‘the main reason is’, ‘for example’ and ‘as a result’ are called **signposts**⁸³. They show listeners where your explanation is going. Learn them as complete phrases, making them easier to **recall**⁸⁴ under pressure.

You do not need the perfect word. If you cannot remember ‘**postpone**⁸⁵’, say



FINDING YOUR PREPOSITIONS

Fill in the gaps with the correct preposition:
of, to, as, from, on, after.

More than one answer may be correct.

- Public speaking combines several distinct sources _____ anxiety for multilingual professionals.
- Confident speakers learn to put their nervous energy _____ work rather than trying to suppress it.
- Reframing anxiety _____ excitement can significantly improve your performance on stage.
- Self-focused attention prevents a speaker _____ reading the room or engaging the audience.
- Instead of worrying about your accent, focus _____ what the listeners need to understand.
- Pausing between key ideas contributes greatly _____ overall speech clarity and intelligibility.
- Practice deliberately losing your place and returning _____ your natural rhythm.
- True confidence usually develops _____ action, not before taking the stage.

BEM TEST

Answers: 1. of, 2. to, 3. as, 4. from, 5. on, 6. to, 7. to, 8. after/from

⁶³ **pacing** 'peɪsɪŋ tempo wypowiedzi

⁶⁴ **adjustment** ə'dʒʌstmənt dostosowanie, poprawka

⁶⁵ **to run a timer** tə rʌn ə 'taɪmə włączyć stoper

⁶⁶ **deliberately** dɪ'lɪbəreɪtli **tu:** celowo, świadomie

⁶⁷ **to lose one's place** tə luːz wʌnz pleɪs **tu:** zgubić wątek

⁶⁸ **exposure-based treatment** ɪk'spəʊʒə beɪst 'tri:tmənt terapia ekspozycyjna

⁶⁹ **manageable** 'mænɪdʒəbl możliwy do opanowania, znośny

⁷⁰ **to weaken sth** tə 'wi:kən 'sʌmθɪŋ osłabić coś

⁷¹ **intolerable** ɪn'tolərəbl nie do zniesienia

⁷² **to collapse** tə kə'læps **tu:** załamać się, rozpaść się

⁷³ **route** ru:t **tu:** schemat, sposób

⁷⁴ **to recommend** tə ,rekə'mend zalecić, rekomendować

⁷⁵ **to delay sth** tə dɪ'leɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ opóźnić coś

⁷⁶ **product launch** 'prɒdʌkt lɔːntʃ wprowadzenie produktu na rynek

⁷⁷ **main point** meɪn pɔɪnt główny punkt, główna myśl

⁷⁸ **incomplete** ɪn'kəm'pli:t niekompletny, niedokończony

⁷⁹ **dependable** dɪ'pendəbl **tu:** pewny, niezawodny

⁸⁰ **to verify sth** tə 'verɪfaɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ zweryfikować, sprawdzić coś

⁸¹ **user login** 'juːzə 'lɒɡɪn **tu:** logowanie użytkownika

⁸² **as a result** æz ə rɪ'zʌlt w rezultacie

⁸³ **signpost** 'saɪnpəʊst **tu:** znacznik, wskaźnik (w wypowiedzi)

⁸⁴ **to recall sth** tə rɪ'kɔːl 'sʌmθɪŋ przypomnieć sobie coś

⁸⁵ **to postpone sth** tə pəʊst'pəʊn 'sʌmθɪŋ przełożyć, odroczyć coś

move it to a later date. If the listener looks confused, try **let me put that another way**⁸⁶. This is known as **communication repair**⁸⁷: noticing that something has not worked and finding another way to express it. It is a normal and useful part of communication, especially in meetings.

Let Confidence Catch Up

After your speech, **resist**⁸⁸ the **urge**⁸⁹ to **replay**⁹⁰ every mistake. A missing article or imperfect sentence matters far less than whether people understood your point. Look at what happened. Did the meeting reach a decision? Could listeners **identify**⁹¹ your main message? Did their questions show interest or **genuine**⁹² confusion?

Confidence often develops after action, not before it. Each time you explain an idea clearly, **handle**⁹³ a question or **recover from**⁹⁴ a lost word, you gain evidence that you can manage the situation. You may still feel nervous, pause occasionally and speak with a strong accent. None of that prevents you from **commanding the room**⁹⁵. Begin with something worth saying, make it clear – and allow confidence to follow.

⁸⁶ **let me put that another way** let mi: pʊt ðæt ə'nləðə weɪ **inaczej mówiąc, pozwolę sobie to ująć inaczej**

⁸⁷ **communication repair** kə'mju:nɪ'keɪʃn rɪ'peə **tu: uściślenie niejasnej wypowiedzi**

⁸⁸ **to resist sth** tə rɪ'zɪst 'sʌmθɪŋ **oprzeczyć czemuś**

⁸⁹ **urge** ɜ:dʒ **pragnienie, pokusa**

⁹⁰ **to replay sth** tə rɪ'pleɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: odtwarzać, wracać do czegoś w myślach**

⁹¹ **to identify sth** tə aɪ'dentɪfaɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ **rozpoznać, zidentyfikować coś**

⁹² **genuine** 'dʒenjuɪn **rzeczywisty, prawdziwy**

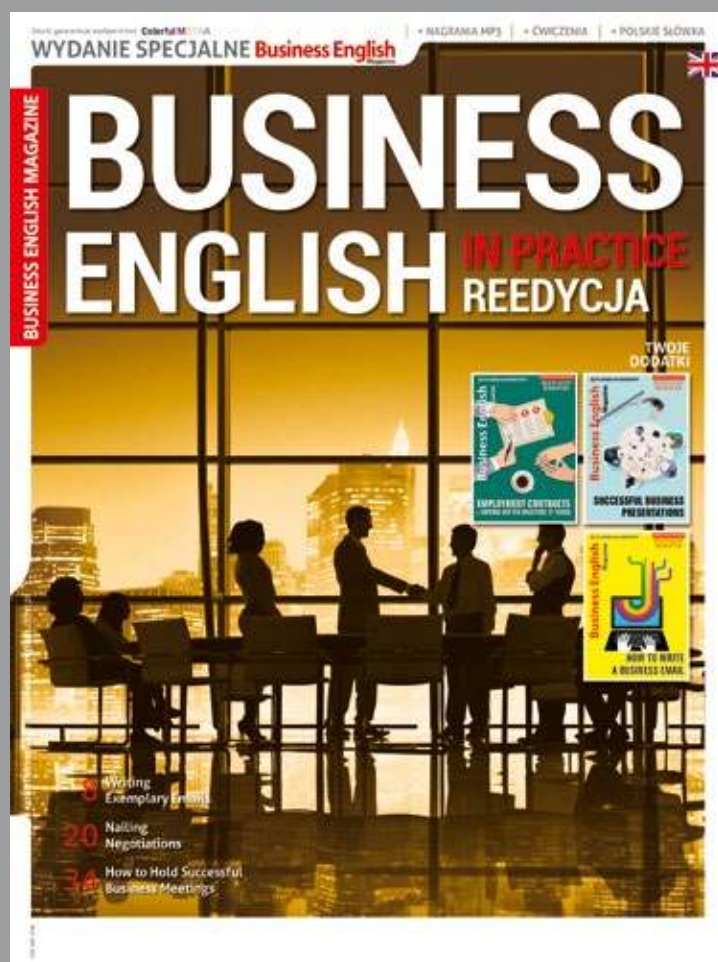
⁹³ **to handle sth** tə 'hændl 'sʌmθɪŋ **poradzić sobie z czymś, tu też: odpowiedzieć na pytanie**

⁹⁴ **to recover from sth** tə rɪ'kʌvə frəm 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu: wyjść z czegoś, poradzić sobie z czymś**

⁹⁵ **to command the room** tə kə'mɑ:nd ðə ru:m **panować nad salą, przejąć kontrolę nad audytorium**

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Resort Rage¹ in Albania

In Albania, one ambitious development has **ignited**² weeks of mass protests and reopened **long-standing**³ debates about corruption, conservation and who **has the final say**⁴ in the country's future. Pack your bags with BEM's **Jonathan Sidor** and see why a billionaire-backed resort is causing so much **uproar**⁵.

¹ **resort rage** rɪ'zɔ:t reɪdʒ oburzenie wokół kurortów

² **to ignite sth** tə ɪg'naɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu:** wywołać, rozpętać coś

³ **long-standing** ˌlɒŋ 'stændɪŋ od dawna

istniejący, wieloletni

⁴ **to have the final say** tə hæv ðə 'faɪnl seɪ mieć rozstrzygający głos, decydować

⁵ **uproar** 'ʌprɔ: wzburzenie, poruszenie

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

to be embroiled in sth
/tə bi ɪm'brɔɪld ɪn
'sʌmθɪŋ/
być uwikłanym w coś,
być zaplątanym w coś

A planned luxury resort aims to transform part of Albania's spectacular coastline into an exclusive destination for the wealthy. Supporters hail⁶ it as a once-in-a-generation⁷ investment, but opponents see something very different. Backed by Jared Kushner – Donald Trump's son-in-law⁸ – the proposed resort is embroiled⁹ in controversies involving the privatisation¹⁰ of protected land, political favouritism¹¹, and ordinary citizens losing out¹² on their chance to reshape their country.

More Than a Resort

The development in question focuses on Sazan Island and nearby coastal areas along the Albanian Riviera, a stretch of coastline celebrated for its turquoise water, rugged¹³ cliffs, hidden coves¹⁴ and remarkable biodiversity¹⁵. For decades, Sazan remained largely inaccessible because it served as a military base during Albania's communist era. Today, it forms part of a protected natural preserve¹⁶, home to rare plants, birds and marine life.

That setting is exactly what makes the project so divisive¹⁷. Developers are swooping in¹⁸, envisaging¹⁹ luxury hotels, villas, marinas²⁰ and high-end²¹ tourism facilities capable of attracting visitors with deep pockets²² from around the world. Government officials who support construction argue that investments on this scale could bolster²³ Albania's tourism industry, create employment and raise the country's international profile²⁴.

Critics, on the other hand, counter²⁵ that some landscapes possess value precisely because they have escaped intensive development. Once coastlines are transformed into private resorts, they claim, the charming²⁶ character of any place – and public access to it – can disappear for generations.

Albanians Take to the Streets²⁷

For weeks, thousands of people have gathered in Tirana and other parts of the country, demanding greater transparency²⁸ over how major development projects are approved. Environmental organisations, students, anti-corruption activists, opposition supporters, and concerned local residents have all joined the demonstrations, making them some of the largest Albania has witnessed in decades.

Although international headlines often frame²⁹ the demonstrations as protests against Jared Kushner, many Albanians insist the movement is about something much broader.

In fact, the protesters' concerns extend well beyond³⁰ environmental conservation, too. Many question why protected areas were opened to large-scale³¹ construction, and whether existing laws were amended³² specifically to accommodate³³ strategic foreign investors. Others fear that public land is increasingly being transferred into private hands with limited scrutiny³⁴. For them, the luxury resort has become a symbol of a pernicious³⁵ political culture in which major decisions are negotiated behind closed doors³⁶ rather than debated openly.

Some demonstrations have remained peaceful, while others have turned confrontational³⁷. The latter variety tends to feature clashes³⁸ between protesters, police, and security personnel. Images of damaged fencing³⁹, vandalised⁴⁰ bulldozers⁴¹,

⁶ to hail sth tə heɪl 'sʌmθɪŋ okrzyknąć coś bardzo dobrym

⁷ once-in-a-generation ˌwʌns ɪn ə ˌdʒenə'reɪʃn zdarzający się raz na pokolenie

⁸ son-in-law 'sʌn ɪn lɔː zięć

⁹ to be embroiled in sth tə bi ɪm'brɔɪld ɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ być uwikłanym w coś, być zaplątanym w coś

¹⁰ privatisation ˌpraɪvətaɪ'zeɪʃn prywatyzacja

¹¹ favouritism 'feɪvərɪtɪzəm faworyzowanie, kumoterstwo

¹² to lose out tə luːz aʊt stracić, przegrać

¹³ rugged 'rʌɡɪd tu: urwisty

¹⁴ cove kəʊv zatoczka, mała zatoka

¹⁵ biodiversity ˌbaɪəʊdaɪ'vɜːsəti różnorodność biologiczna

¹⁶ preserve ˈprɪːzəv tu: rezerwat, obszar chroniony

¹⁷ divisive dɪ'vaɪsɪv dzielący, budzący spory

¹⁸ to swoop in tə swuːp ɪn tu: wkraczać na scenę

¹⁹ to envisage sth tə ɪn'vɪʒɪdʒ 'sʌmθɪŋ przewidywać, planować coś

²⁰ marina mə'riːnə przystań jachtowa

²¹ high-end ˌhaɪ 'end luksusowy, z najwyższej półki

²² deep pockets dɪːp 'pɒkɪts głęboki portfel, duże zasoby finansowe

²³ to bolster sth tə ˈbɒlsɪtə 'sʌmθɪŋ wzmocnić, wesprzeć coś

²⁴ to raise sb's profile tə reɪz 'sʌmbədɪz 'prəʊfaɪl zwiększyć czyjąś widoczność

²⁵ to counter tə ˈkaʊntə tu: ripostować, odpowiedzieć

²⁶ charming 'tʃɑːmɪŋ urokliwy, czarujący

²⁷ to take to the streets tə teɪk tə ðə striːts wyjść na ulice, protestować

²⁸ transparency træns'pærənsɪ przejrzystość

²⁹ to frame sth tə freɪm 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: przedstawiać coś, ujmować coś

³⁰ to extend beyond sth tə ɪk'stend brɪ'jɒnd 'sʌmθɪŋ wykraczać poza coś

³¹ large-scale ˌlɑːdʒ 'skeɪl na dużą skalę

³² to amend sth tə ə'mend 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: zmienić, poprawić coś

³³ to accommodate sb/sth tə ə'kɒmədət 'sʌmbədi 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: dostosować się do kogoś/czegoś, uwzględnić kogoś/coś

³⁴ scrutiny 'skruːtɪni kontrola, weryfikacja

³⁵ pernicious pə'nɪʃəs zgubny, szkodliwy

³⁶ behind closed doors brɪ'haɪnd kləʊzd dɔːz za zamkniętymi drzwiami, potajemnie

³⁷ confrontational ˌkɒnfrən'teɪʃənɪl konfrontacyjny, prowadzący do starcia

³⁸ clash klæʃ tu: starcie

³⁹ fencing 'fensɪŋ tu: ogrodzenie

⁴⁰ to vandalise sth tə 'vændəlaɪz 'sʌmθɪŋ zdewastować coś

⁴¹ bulldozer ˈbɒldəʊzə spychacz, buldożer



IMAGES OF DAMAGED FENCING, VANDALISED BULLDOZERS AND CROWDS WAVING FLAMINGO FLAGS HAVE CIRCULATED WIDELY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS BROADCASTS.

and crowds waving **flamingo**⁴² flags have **circulated**⁴³ widely on social media and international news broadcasts. The flamingo was chosen to represent the **threatened**⁴⁴ **wetlands**⁴⁵, which **host**⁴⁶ about 12 percent of the country's wintering **waterbirds**⁴⁷. Creatures like **otters**⁴⁸, turtles, **dolphins**⁴⁹, frogs, and, yes, even bright pink flamingos are known to call the region home.

Why the European Union Is Paying Attention⁵⁰

The controversy no longer concerns Albania alone. As a **candidate country**⁵¹ seeking EU membership, Albania is expected to demonstrate strong standards in areas such as environmental protection, **judicial independence**⁵², transparency and the **rule of law**⁵³. The dispute surrounding the resort has therefore started **making waves**⁵⁴ that **ripple**⁵⁵ far past the Balkans.

European officials and **lawmakers**⁵⁶ have **voiced**⁵⁷ worries that weakening environmental **safeguards**⁵⁸ or **fast-tracking**⁵⁹ projects without sufficient **oversight**⁶⁰ could **undermine**⁶¹ Albania's **accession**⁶² process. While the resort itself won't determine whether or not the country eventually

joins the EU, critics argue that the way the project has been handled raises uncomfortable questions about **governance**⁶³ and **accountability**⁶⁴.

Moreover, the debate illustrates an increasingly common **dilemma**⁶⁵ facing countries with booming tourism industries. How can governments attract billions in foreign investment without **sacrificing**⁶⁶ environmental protections or **alienating**⁶⁷ their own citizens? **Walking that tightrope**⁶⁸ is often a **convoluted**⁶⁹ **balancing act**⁷⁰.

⁴² flamingo flə'mɪŋɡəʊ flaming

⁴³ to circulate tə'sɜ:kjəleɪt tu: krążyć, rozprzestrzeniać się

⁴⁴ threatened 'θreɪnd zagrożony

⁴⁵ wetland 'wetlənd tereny podmokłe, mokradła

⁴⁶ to host sth tə hɒst 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: gościć coś, być domem dla czegoś

⁴⁷ waterbird 'wɔ:təbɜ:d ptak wodny

⁴⁸ otter 'ɒtə wydra

⁴⁹ dolphin 'dɒlfɪn delfin

⁵⁰ to pay attention to sth tə peɪ ə'tenʃn tə 'sʌmθɪŋ zwracać na coś uwagę

⁵¹ candidate country 'kændɪdət 'kʌntri kraj kandydujący (do Unii Europejskiej)

⁵² judicial independence dʒu:'dɪʃl ,ɪndɪ'pendəns niezależność sądownictwa

⁵³ rule of law ru:l ɒv lɔ: praworządność

⁵⁴ to make waves tə meɪk weɪvz narobić zamieszania, wywołać poruszenie

⁵⁵ to ripple tə 'rɪpl tu: rozchodzić się falami

⁵⁶ lawmaker 'lɔ:meɪkə prawodawca, ustawodawca

⁵⁷ to voice sth tə vɔɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: wyrazić, wypowiedzieć coś

⁵⁸ safeguard 'seɪfɡɑ:d zabezpieczenie, ochrona

⁵⁹ to fast-track sth tə 'fɑ:st træk 'sʌmθɪŋ przyspieszyć coś, uprościć procedurę

⁶⁰ oversight 'əʊvsəɪt tu: nadzór

⁶¹ to undermine sth tə ,ʌndə'maɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ podkopać, osłabić coś

⁶² accession ək'seɪʃn tu: przystąpienie, akcesja

⁶³ governance 'ɡʌvənəns zarządzanie, rządzenie

⁶⁴ accountability ə,kəʊntə'bɪləti rozliczalność, odpowiedzialność

⁶⁵ dilemma dɪ'lemə dylemat

⁶⁶ to sacrifice sth tə 'sækrɪfaɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ poświęcić coś

⁶⁷ to alienate sb tə 'eɪliəneɪt 'sʌmbədi zrazić kogoś, zantagonizować kogoś

⁶⁸ to walk a tightrope tə wɔ:k ə 'taɪtrəʊp lawirować, dosł. iść po linie do akrobacji

⁶⁹ convoluted 'kɒnvəlu:tɪd zawity, skomplikowany

⁷⁰ balancing act 'bælənsɪŋ ækt balansowanie, lawirowanie

Tourism vs. Preservation

To put this latest drama in context⁷¹, it's important to note Albania's remarkable transformation over the past two decades. Once one of Europe's least-visited destinations, Albania has become one of the continent's fastest-growing tourist hotspots⁷². A record 12 million tourists paid Albania a visit⁷³ in 2025. These groups are drawn by stunning mountain scenery, ancient archaeological⁷⁴ sites, Ottoman-era⁷⁵ villages and an enviable⁷⁶ Adriatic coastline often compared to neighbouring Croatia or Greece. The thing is, Albania offers far lower prices.

That rapid popularity, however, brings its own challenges. Hotels, roads, airports and restaurants create jobs and stimulate local economies. This is a boon⁷⁷ on the surface, but unchecked⁷⁸ development can strain⁷⁹ infrastructure, inflate⁸⁰ housing prices, restrict access to public beaches and permanently alter⁸¹ fragile⁸² ecosystems⁸³.

This tension is hardly unique to Albania. Similar conflagrations⁸⁴ have ignited in Spain, Italy, and across the Mediterranean, where overtourism⁸⁵ and luxury developments have forced governments to reconsider how much construction coastal regions⁸⁶ can absorb⁸⁷ before they lose the very qualities that lured⁸⁸ visitors in the first place. For many Albanians, the question isn't whether tourism should continue growing. It's what kind of tourism the country wants to encourage.

What Happens Next?

The future of the Sazan resort remains uncertain, but the protests have already shifted⁸⁹ the conversation. A project that was initially presented as a major economic opportunity has evolved into⁹⁰ a national conflict about environmental stewardship⁹¹, democratic decision-making and Albania's long-term identity. Should spectacular coastlines become exclusive enclaves⁹² for luxury tourism, or should they remain shared natural spaces that benefit local communities as well as visitors?

Whatever happens to the resort itself, one thing is clear: the controversy has

become about far more than a single island. It has forced Albania to confront⁹³ difficult questions about growth, conservation and the price a country is willing to pay in pursuit of⁹⁴ progress. For a nation juggling⁹⁵ economic ambition along with its European aspirations⁹⁶, these questions are unlikely to disappear any time soon.

⁷¹ to put sth in context *tə pʊt 'sʌmθɪŋ ɪn*

'kontekst umieścić coś w kontekście

⁷² hotspot *'hɒtspɒt tu: popularne miejsce*

⁷³ to pay sb a visit *tə peɪ 'sʌmbədi ə 'vɪzɪt* *złożyć komuś wizytę, odwiedzić kogoś*

⁷⁴ archaeological *ˌɑːkiə'lɒdʒɪkl* *archeologiczny*

⁷⁵ Ottoman-era *'ɒtəmən 'ɪərə* *z epoki ottomańskiej*

⁷⁶ enviable *'enviəbl* *godny pozazdroszczenia*

⁷⁷ boon *bu:n* *dobrodzieństwo,*

blagosławieństwo

⁷⁸ unchecked *ˌʌn'tʃekt* *niekontrolowany, niepohamowany*

⁷⁹ to strain sth *tə streɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:*

nadwyżyć, obciążyć coś

⁸⁰ to inflate sth *tə ɪn'fleɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* *zawyżyć, podnieść coś*

⁸¹ to alter sth *tə ɔ:l'tə 'sʌmθɪŋ* *zmienić, przekształcić coś*

⁸² fragile *'frædʒaɪl tu:* *kruchy, wrażliwy*

⁸³ ecosystem *'i:kəʊsɪstəm* *ekosystem*

⁸⁴ conflagration *ˌkɒnflə'greɪʃn tu:* *konflikt*

⁸⁵ overtourism *'əʊvətʊərɪzm* *nadmierna turystyka*

⁸⁶ coastal region *'kəʊstl 'ri:dʒn* *region przybrzeżny*

⁸⁷ to absorb sth *tə əb'zɔ:b 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* *przyjąć, wchłonać coś*

⁸⁸ to lure sb *tə lʊə 'sʌmbədi* *wabić, przyciągnąć kogoś*

⁸⁹ to shift sth *tə ʃɪft 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* *zmienić, przesunąć coś*

⁹⁰ to evolve into sth *tə ɪ'vɒlv ɪntə 'sʌmθɪŋ* *przekształcić się w coś, rozwinąć się w coś*

⁹¹ stewardship *'stjuːədʃɪp tu:* *zarządzanie, opieka*

⁹² enclave *'enkleɪv* *enklawa*

⁹³ to confront sth *tə kən'frʌnt 'sʌmθɪŋ* *stawić czoła czemuś, zmierzyć się z czymś*

⁹⁴ in pursuit of sth *ɪn pə'sju:t ɒv 'sʌmθɪŋ* *w pogoni za czymś*

⁹⁵ to juggle sth *tə 'dʒʌɡl 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* *zonglować czymś, łączyć coś*

⁹⁶ aspiration *ˌæspə'reɪʃn* *aspiracja, dążenie*



Greece: The Best Place to Retire¹ in 2026

¹ to retire to rɪˈtaɪə przejść na emeryturę

² golden years ˈɡəʊldən jɪəz lata na emeryturze, dosł. złote lata

Dreaming of retiring to somewhere sunny, affordable and full of history? According to one of the world's best-known rankings, Greece has climbed to the top in 2026. Join BEM's **Jonathan Sidor** to see why it's worth spending your **golden years**² there.



THE GREEK
EXPRESSION SIGA
SIGA, WHICH
TRANSLATES TO
"SLOWLY, SLOWLY,"
CAPTURES
THIS RELAXED
APPROACH TO LIFE.

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A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

to play second fiddle
to sb/sth /tə plɪz 'se-
kənd 'fɪdl tə 'sʌmbədɪ
'sʌmθɪŋ/ być na drugim
planie, grać drugie
skrzypce względem kogoś/
czegoś

Greece has been named the world's best place to retire for 2026 by International Living. It's a publication that evaluates countries based on factors like cost of living, healthcare and climate. Even things like housing infrastructure and overall quality of life play a role. After years of playing second fiddle to³ the likes of⁴ Spain and Portugal, Greece has earned its moment in the spotlight.

Why Greece Came Out on Top⁵

What's making Greece more alluring⁶ than the call of a Siren⁷? Well, one of Greece's biggest advantages is balance. You can enjoy Mediterranean weather, fresh local food, modern healthcare and beautiful scenery. And you can get all of this without forking over⁸ the prices you'd find in many other European destinations.

Greece also has a leg up⁹ because life there tends to move at a different rhythm. Long lunches, evening walks on the waterfront¹⁰, neighbourhood cafés, and time spent with family remain dominant parts of everyday culture. The Greek expression *siga siga*, which translates to "slowly, slowly," captures this relaxed approach to a tee.

The fact the days seem to pass by at a snail's pace¹¹ doesn't mean boredom. Greece offers vibrant cities, tranquil¹² villages, mountain landscapes and thousands of islands, giving retirees plenty of options to find a lifestyle tailored¹³ precisely to their needs. They really are spoiled for choice¹⁴.

Outdoors and Extraordinary

Retirement often means having more free time. In some places, that might mean more time spent resting in bed or lounging around¹⁵ the house. In Greece, that's not the case at all.

Greece makes it easy to spend your leisure time¹⁶ outside. The country enjoys hundreds of sunny days each year, encouraging folk¹⁷ to walk, swim, or hike on

virtually a daily basis. Gardening is another popular pastime¹⁸, and eating meals al fresco¹⁹ can be accomplished on a regular basis. Many towns are built around public squares and waterfront promenades²⁰ where people naturally gather and spend heaps of²¹ time throughout the day.

Traversing²² islands by car is an option, but many residents opt to²³ walk most places. Ambling²⁴ to local shops, bakeries or markets is easy to do without breaking a sweat²⁵ – unless it's a particularly sweltering²⁶ day. All these small daily habits can make staying active at any age feel effortless.

Living in Greece also means history is never far away. You might drink coffee with a view of a centuries-old harbour²⁷, shop beneath ancient monuments, or spend weekends exploring archaeological sites²⁸ that people are willing to cross oceans²⁹ to visit. Rather than feeling like plain tourist attractions, these historic wonders can simply become part of your daily life. And Greece boasts³⁰ a mix of old and new that few other destinations can match.

More Than Islands

What makes Greece especially attractive is the sheer³¹ variety it offers. You can wake up overlooking olive groves³² and finish the day watching the sun sink into³³ the Aegean³⁴. Whether you picture retirement in a bustling³⁵ seaside city or a sleepy³⁶ fishing town, Greece gives retirees a remarkable range of places to call home.

The Greek islands certainly feature front and centre³⁷ in most travel brochures. Crete consistently ranks among the most practical choices thanks to its sizeable³⁸ population, international airports, and active communities year-round³⁹. Corfu combines lush⁴⁰ green landscapes with

kuszająca śpiewem

⁸ to fork over sth *tə fɔ:k əvə 'sʌmθɪŋ* wyłożyć pieniądze, zapłacić niechętnie dużą sumę

⁹ to have a leg up *tə hæv ə leg ʌp* mieć przewagę, być w korzystniejszej sytuacji

¹⁰ waterfront *'wɔ:təfrʌnt* nabrzeże, deptak nadmorski

¹¹ at a snail's pace *æt ə sneɪlz peɪs* w żółwym tempie, bardzo wolno

¹² tranquil *'træŋkwɪl* spokojny, cichy

¹³ tailored *'teɪləd tu:* dostosowany, skrojony na miarę

¹⁴ to be spoiled for choice *tə bi spɔɪld fə tʃɔɪs* mieć trudność z wyborem ze względu na obfitość możliwości

¹⁵ to lounge around *tə laʊndʒ ə'raʊnd* leniuchować, wylegiwać się

¹⁶ leisure time *'leɪʒə taɪm* czas wolny

¹⁷ folk *fəʊk tu:* ludzie

¹⁸ pastime *'pɑ:staɪm* rozrywka, hobby

¹⁹ al fresco *æl 'freskəʊ* na świeżym powietrzu, pod gołym niebem (o jedzeniu)

²⁰ promenade *'prɒmə'neɪd* promenada, deptak

²¹ heaps of sth *hi:ps əv 'sʌmθɪŋ* mnóstwo, masa czegoś

²² to traverse *tə trə'vɜ:s* przemierzać, przejechać przez

²³ to opt to do sth *tə ɒpt tə du: 'sʌmθɪŋ* zdecydować się na zrobienie czegoś

²⁴ to amble *tə 'æmbəl* przechadzać się, iść spokojnym krokiem

²⁵ to break a sweat *tə breɪk ə swet* spocić się, zmęczyć się

²⁶ sweltering *'sweltərɪŋ* skwarny, upalny

²⁷ harbour *'hɑ:bə* port, przystań

²⁸ archaeological site *ˌɑ:kɪə'lɒdʒɪkəl saɪt* stanowisko archeologiczne

²⁹ to cross oceans *tə kros ə'ʊʃənz* przemierzyć oceany, pokonać wielkie odległości

³⁰ to boast sth *tə bəʊst 'sʌmθɪŋ* szczycić się czymś

³¹ sheer *ʃɪə tu:* sam, czysty

³² olive grove *'ɒlɪv grəʊv* gaj oliwny

³³ to sink into sth *tə sɪŋk 'ɪntə 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* zanurzać się w coś, zachodzić

³⁴ the Aegean *ði i'dʒi:ən* Morze Egejskie

³⁵ bustling *'bʌslɪŋ* tętniący życiem, ruchliwy

³⁶ sleepy *'sli:pi tu:* senny, ospały, cichy

³⁷ to feature front and centre *tə 'fi:tʃə frʌnt and 'sentə* zajmować centralne miejsce, być w centrum uwagi

³⁸ sizeable *'saɪzəbl* pokaźny, niemały

³⁹ year-round *jɪə raʊnd* całoroczny

⁴⁰ lush *lʌʃ* bujny, soczysto zielony

³ to play second fiddle *tə pleɪ 'sekənd 'fɪdl* być na drugim planie, grać drugie skrzypce

⁴ the likes of X *ðə laɪks əv eks* tacy jak X

⁵ to come out on top *tə kʌm aʊt ɒn tɒp* wyjść zwycięsko, zająć najwyżej

⁶ alluring *ə'lʊərɪŋ* pociągający, kuszący

⁷ Siren *'saɪrən* syrena, mitologiczna istota

Venetian⁴¹ architecture, while Rhodes offers warm weather alongside a beautifully preserved old town.

Many retirees, however, stick to⁴² the mainland⁴³. Athens has all the amenities⁴⁴ you can expect from a leading capital city. Further north lies Thessaloniki, the country's second-largest city. It blends history with modern urban life and caters to⁴⁵ those who enjoy museums, theatres and cultural events.

Affordability⁴⁶ That Doesn't Feel Cheap

Retirement frequently revolves around⁴⁷ making your savings⁴⁸ go further⁴⁹, and this is another one of Greece's selling points⁵⁰. While prices vary across the country, day-to-day living is generally more affordable than in much of Western and Northern Europe. Housing, dining out⁵¹ and a host of⁵² everyday services cost noticeably⁵³ less, allowing retirees to enjoy a comfortable lifestyle without having to watch every euro⁵⁴.

⁴¹ Venetian və'ni:ʃən wenecki

⁴² to stick to sth tə stɪk tə 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: trzymać się czegoś, pozostać przy czymś

⁴³ mainland 'meɪnlənd ląd stały, kontynent

⁴⁴ amenity ə'mi:nəti udogodnienie, wygoda

⁴⁵ to cater to sb tə 'keɪtə tə 'sʌmbədɪ zaspokajać czyjeś potrzeby, być przeznaczonym dla kogoś

⁴⁶ affordability ə'fɔ:d ə'bɪləti przystępność cenowa

⁴⁷ to revolve around sth tə rɪ'vɒlv ə'raʊnd 'sʌmθɪŋ kręcić się wokół czegoś, koncentrować się na czymś

⁴⁸ savings 'seɪvɪŋz oszczędności

⁴⁹ to go further tə ɡəʊ 'fɜ:ðə tu: wystarczyć na więcej

⁵⁰ selling point 'selɪŋ poɪnt atut, argument sprzedażowy

⁵¹ dining out 'daɪnɪŋ aʊt jedzenie obiadu poza domem, jedzenie na mieście

⁵² a host of ə həʊst ɒv mnóstwo, masa

⁵³ noticeably 'nəʊtɪsəbli zauważalnie, wyraźnie

⁵⁴ to watch every euro tə wɒtʃ 'evri 'jʊərəʊ liczyć każde euro, oszczędzać na wszystkim



Add fresh food to the **pro column**⁵⁵. Weekly markets **overflow with**⁵⁶ **seasonal**⁵⁷ fruit and vegetables, locally produced olive oil and freshly baked bread. Shopping locally is usually cheaper than **relying on**⁵⁸ supermarkets, and it tends to be a pleasant experience. Combined with the Mediterranean diet that emphasises fish, **legumes**⁵⁹ and **whole grains**⁶⁰, eating well rarely **comes with a premium price tag**.⁶¹

What's more, dining out doesn't have to **be reserved for**⁶² celebrations. It's **woven into**⁶³ daily life, and many Greeks take pleasure in **lingering over**⁶⁴ long meals at **family-run**⁶⁵ **tavernas**⁶⁶. Generous portions and traditional recipes are **the norm**⁶⁷, and they're typically **reasonably priced**⁶⁸.

Healthcare that doesn't **cost an arm and a leg**⁶⁹ also contributes to Greece's appeal. Both public and private medical services are available, and many **expats**⁷⁰ report private care is significantly less expensive than in other countries. Nevertheless, treatment remains high-quality. Routine appointments, **specialist consultations**⁷¹ and **diagnostic tests**⁷² are often **attainable**⁷³ without **eye-watering**⁷⁴ bills that retirees may face elsewhere.

Of course, affordability still **boils down to**⁷⁵ the specific place you choose to



⁵⁵ **pro column** prəʊ 'kɒləm lista zalet, zalety

⁵⁶ **to overflow with sth** tʊ ˌəʊvə'fləʊ wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ
być pełnym czegoś, obfitować w coś

⁵⁷ **seasonal** 'si:zənɪl sezonowy

⁵⁸ **to rely on sth** tə ri'laɪ ɒn polegać, opierać się na czymś

⁵⁹ **legume** 'legju:m roślina strączkowa, nasiona strączkowe

⁶⁰ **whole grain** həʊl greɪn pełne ziarno, produkty pełnoziarniste

⁶¹ **to come with a premium price tag** tə kʌm wɪð ə 'pri:mjəm praɪs tæg wiązać się z wysoką ceną

⁶² **to be reserved for sth** tə bi ri'zɜ:vəd fə 'sʌmθɪŋ
być zarezerwowanym dla czegoś, być przeznaczonym tylko na coś

⁶³ **to be woven into sth** tə bi 'wəʊvən 'ɪntə 'sʌmθɪŋ być wplecionym w coś, stanowić integralną część

⁶⁴ **to linger over sth** tə 'lɪŋgə 'əʊvə 'sʌmθɪŋ nie spieszyc się z czymś, zasiadać długo przy czymś

⁶⁵ **family-run** 'fæməli rʌn prowadzony/ zarządzany przez rodzinę, rodzinny

⁶⁶ **taverna** tə'vɜ:nə tawerna (grecka restauracja)

⁶⁷ **the norm** ðə nɔ:m norma, standard

⁶⁸ **reasonably priced** 'ri:zənəbli praɪst w przystępnej cenie

⁶⁹ **to cost an arm and a leg** tə kɒst ən ɑ:m ənd ə leg kosztować majątek

⁷⁰ **expat** 'ekspæt ekspatriant, osoba żyjąca na obczyźnie

⁷¹ **specialist consultation** 'speʃəlɪst ,kɒnsəl'teɪʃən konsultacja specjalistyczna

⁷² **diagnostic test** ,daɪəg'nɒstɪk test badanie diagnostyczne

⁷³ **attainable** ə'teɪnəbl osiągalny, dostępny

⁷⁴ **eye-watering** 'aɪ wɔ:tərɪŋ tu: boleśnie wysoki

HEALTHCARE THAT DOESN'T COST AN ARM AND A LEG ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO GREECE'S APPEAL.

(o cenach)

⁷⁵ **to boil down to** tə bɔɪl daʊn tə sprowadzać się do czegoś

settle down⁷⁶. Glamorous⁷⁷ hotspots⁷⁸ like Santorini and Mykonos command⁷⁹ sky-high⁸⁰ prices, especially during the peak tourist season⁸¹. Venture beyond⁸² the most famous places, and you'll find innumerable⁸³ towns and cities where your retirement income stretches⁸⁴ considerably⁸⁵ further without compromising on⁸⁶ comfort or quality of life.

Other Top Destinations

Although Greece claimed⁸⁷ first place, several other countries also ranked highly⁸⁸ for different reasons. Panama continues to attract retirees with its warm climate and well-developed⁸⁹ infrastructure. Costa Rica appeals to people who seek year-round greenery⁹⁰ and prioritise⁹¹ environmental conservation⁹².

In Europe, Portugal remains popular thanks to its mild⁹³ weather, superb health-care and relaxed Atlantic⁹⁴ way of living. France stands out⁹⁵ for its rich culture, while Spain is another favourable⁹⁶ option thanks to its sunny coastlines and welcoming⁹⁷ atmosphere.

Also landing⁹⁸ in the top 10 is Thailand, which is known for low living costs and its picturesque⁹⁹ tropical¹⁰⁰ setting. There's also its neighbour Malaysia, which hosts sprawling¹⁰¹ metropolises¹⁰² that showcase¹⁰³ high degrees of cultural diversity¹⁰⁴.

Is Greece Right for You?

No destination is perfect for everyone. Some retirees may prefer cooler climates, while others desire to stay close to home. Still, Greece offers a marvellous mix that's difficult to ignore. Envable¹⁰⁵ weather, stunning landscapes and a way of living that goes easy on¹⁰⁶ your bank account. After years of taking a backseat¹⁰⁷ to Europe's retirement favourites, Greece has finally reached the top of International Living's list. For many people planning their next chapter¹⁰⁸, it's a title that's well deserved.

⁷⁶ to settle down *tə 'setl daʊn* osiedlić się, zadomowić się
⁷⁷ glamorous *'glæməərəs* *tu:* ekskluzywny, luksusowy
⁷⁸ hotspot *'hɒtspɒt* gorący punkt, popularne miejsce
⁷⁹ to command sth *tə kə'mə:nd 'sʌmθɪŋ* *tu:* dyktować coś
⁸⁰ sky-high *skai haɪ* astronomiczny, zawrotny
⁸¹ peak tourist season *pi:k 'tʊərɪst 'si:zn* szczyt sezonu turystycznego
⁸² to venture beyond sth *tə 'ventʃə bi'jɒnd 'sʌmθɪŋ* zapuścić się poza coś, wyjść poza coś
⁸³ innumerable *ɪ'nju:mərəbl* niezliczony, bez liku
⁸⁴ to stretch further *tə streɪtʃ 'fɜ:ðə* *tu:* wystarczać na więcej
⁸⁵ considerably *kən'sɪdərəbli* znacznie
⁸⁶ to compromise on sth *tə 'kɒmprəmaɪz ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ* iść na kompromis w sprawie czegoś, rezygnować z czegoś
⁸⁷ to claim *tə kleɪm* *tu:* zdobyć, zająć
⁸⁸ to rank highly *tə ræŋk 'haɪli* znaleźć się wysoko w rankingu
⁸⁹ well-developed *wel dɪ'veləpt* dobrze rozwinięty

⁹⁰ greenery *'ɡri:nəri* zieleń, roślinność
⁹¹ to prioritise sth *praɪ'ɒrɪtaɪz 'sʌmθɪŋ* traktować coś priorytetowo, stawiać coś na pierwszym miejscu
⁹² environmental conservation *ɪn,vəɪrən'mentl ,kɒnsə'veɪʃən* ochrona środowiska
⁹³ mild *maɪld* łagodny
⁹⁴ Atlantic *ət'læntɪk* atlantycki
⁹⁵ to stand out *tə stænd aʊt* wyróżniać się
⁹⁶ favourable *'feɪvərəbl* korzystny, atrakcyjny
⁹⁷ welcoming *'welkəmɪŋ* gościnny
⁹⁸ to land *tə lænd* *tu:* znaleźć się, wylądować
⁹⁹ picturesque *ˌpɪktʃə'resk* malowniczy
¹⁰⁰ tropical *'trɒpɪkəl* tropikalny
¹⁰¹ sprawling *'sprɔ:ɪŋ* rozległy, rozrastający się
¹⁰² metropolis *mə'trɒpəlɪs* metropolia
¹⁰³ to showcase sth *tə 'ʃəʊkeɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ* prezentować, eksponować coś
¹⁰⁴ cultural diversity *'kʌltʃərəl daɪ'vɜ:səti* różnorodność kulturowa
¹⁰⁵ enviable *'enviəbl* godny pozazdroszczenia
¹⁰⁶ to go easy on sth *tə ɡəʊ 'i:zi ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ* być łagodnym dla czegoś
¹⁰⁷ to take a backseat *tə teɪk ə 'bæksɪ:t* zejść na dalszy plan, pozostać w cieniu
¹⁰⁸ next chapter *nekst 'tʃæptə* kolejny rozdział życia, nowy etap



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Japan's Car Industry Stalls

Japan's once-dominant car producers are struggling to **maintain pole position**¹ as more **nimble**² rivals threaten to leave them behind. The **BEM team** **traverses**³ the **bumpy road**⁴ that **lies ahead**⁵.

¹ to maintain pole position *tə meɪn'teɪn pəʊl pə'zɪʃən* utrzymać pozycję lidera

² nimble *'nɪmbl* *tu:* zwinny, elastyczny

³ to traverse sth *tə trə'vɜːs* *'sʌmθɪŋ* przemierzać coś

⁴ bumpy road *'bʌmpi rəʊd* wyboista droga, trudny okres

⁵ to lie ahead *tə laɪ ə'hed* czekać przed kimś, być przed kimś

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

benchmark
/'bentʃma:k/
punkt odniesienia,
wzorzec



EARLY EXPORTS TO BRITAIN AND NORTH AMERICA OFTEN STRUGGLED TO WIN OVER MOTORISTS.

and lacking **refinement**¹⁰. Compared with larger American models or established European brands, they were viewed by many as unfashionable, budget alternatives rather than serious competitors.

However, they possessed several advantages that gradually became impossible to ignore. They were **fuel-efficient**¹¹, **mechanically simple**¹², inexpensive to buy and remarkably easy to maintain. As fuel prices rose sharply following the 1973 Oil Crisis (See Fact Box), these strengths suddenly became major **selling points**¹³.

Companies including Toyota, Honda, Nissan (then widely known as Datsun in export markets), Mazda, Mitsubishi, Suzuki, Subaru, Isuzu and Daihatsu steadily expanded their international presence. Initially, rather than competing through luxury or performance, they focused on delivering reliable transport at affordable prices.

Japanese Car Production in Numbers

YEAR	VEHICLES PRODUCED (MILLION)
1970	5.29
1975	6.94
1980	11.04
1985	12.27
1990	13.49 (all-time peak)
1995	10.20
2000	10.14
2005	10.80
2010	9.63
2015	9.28
2020	8.07 (COVID)
2024	8.23

Source: Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Motor Industry of Japan 2025.

Humble⁶ Beginnings

Japan's automotive industry began **in earnest**⁷ after World War II, but it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that its manufacturers began targeting overseas markets on a large scale.

Early exports to Britain and North America often struggled to **win over**⁸ **motorists**⁹. Japanese cars were frequently criticised as being small, poor-quality, basic

⁶ humble 'hʌmbl skromny

⁷ in earnest in 'ɜ:nɪst na poważnie, naprawdę

⁸ to win over sb tə win 'əʊvə 'sʌmbədi przekonać kogoś do siebie, zjednać sobie kogoś

Winning the Quality Battle

However, cheap market-entry pricing had some negative consequences. Japanese manufacturers needed to **overturn**¹⁴ negative perceptions of quality. During the

⁹ motorist 'məʊtərɪst kierowca, zmotoryzowany

¹⁰ refinement rɪ'faɪnmənt wyrafinowanie, wykończenie

¹¹ fuel-efficient 'fju:əl ɪ,fɪʃənt oszczędny, ekonomiczny (o zużyciu paliwa)

¹² mechanically simple mə'kæɪnɪkəli 'sɪmpl o prostej konstrukcji

¹³ selling point 'selɪŋ pɔɪnt atut, zaleta (produktu)

¹⁴ to overturn sth tə 'əʊvə'tɜ:n 'sʌmbɪŋ obalić coś, odwrócić coś

HIGHLIGHTS

- Peak production: 13.49 million vehicles in 1990.
- 2024 production: 8.23 million vehicles, around 39 percent below the 1990 peak.
- 2024 vehicle exports: approximately 4.2 million vehicles.
- China overtook Japan as the world's largest vehicle producer in 2009.

INFOBOX

Oil Crisis 1973

The 1973 oil crisis began when Arab members of OPEC **imposed**¹ an **oil embargo**² following the Yom Kippur War. World oil prices almost **quadrupled**³ within months, causing **fuel shortages**⁴, soaring petrol prices and **economic turmoil**⁵ across many Western countries. The sudden demand for smaller, fuel-efficient cars created a major opportunity for Japanese manufacturers.

¹ to impose sth *tə ɪm'pəʊz 'sʌmθɪŋ* nałożyć coś, wprowadzić coś (np. embargo)

² oil embargo *ɔɪl ɪm'bə:ɡəʊ* embargo naftowe

³ to quadruple *tə kwɔ'dru:pl* czterokrotnie wzrosnąć

⁴ fuel shortage *fju:əl 'ʃɔ:tɪdʒ* niedobór paliwa, brak paliwa

⁵ economic turmoil *ˌekə'nɒmɪk 'tɜ:mɔɪl* zawirowania gospodarcze, kryzys gospodarczy

INFOBOX

1970s and 1980s, they **embraced**¹⁵ manufacturing techniques that emphasised **continuous improvement**¹⁶, **waste reduction**¹⁷ and **rigorous**¹⁸ **quality control**¹⁹. The Japanese philosophy of Kaizen (see Fact Box) **was instrumental in**²⁰ raising standards.

Toyota, in particular, **pioneered**²¹ production methods that were later copied worldwide. Its manufacturing system reduced **defects**²², improved efficiency and enabled factories to respond quickly to changing demand. It also developed just-in-time (JIT) **stock control**²³, which minimised **stockholding**²⁴, warehousing and costs by obtaining parts and materials only when needed.

Independent **reliability surveys**²⁵ consistently placed Japanese vehicles near the

top of the rankings. Engines frequently exceeded 200,000 miles with only **routine maintenance**²⁶, while **repair costs**²⁷ remained relatively low.

By the late 1980s, many buyers were choosing Japanese cars not because they were cheap, but because they had **become synonymous with**²⁸ reliability.

Conquering North America

No market proved more important than the United States. The **oil shocks**²⁹ of the 1970s dramatically increased demand for smaller, fuel-efficient cars, precisely the segment in which Japanese manufacturers **excelled**³⁰. Toyota Corolla, Honda Civic and Nissan Sunny became **household names**³¹.

Import restrictions³² introduced during the 1980s failed to **halt**³³ Japanese expansion. Instead, manufacturers responded by building factories directly inside North America. Toyota established major operations in Kentucky, Honda opened production in Ohio, while Nissan invested heavily in Tennessee and Mississippi.

By manufacturing locally, companies avoided **import quotas**³⁴ while creating thousands of American jobs. The strategy proved enormously successful. Today, Japanese manufacturers **collectively**³⁵ produce millions of vehicles annually across North America, with many models sold in the United States actually being built there.

Toyota has frequently ranked among America's best-selling vehicle brands, while Honda has consistently maintained a strong presence across all types of passenger cars.

Success Across Europe

Europe presented a different challenge. Established manufacturers, including Volkswagen, Ford, Renault, Fiat, Peugeot and Vauxhall, already enjoyed **loyal customer bases**³⁶. Nevertheless, Japanese companies steadily gained **market share**³⁷ by offering exceptional reliability and generous **equipment levels**³⁸ at competitive prices.

To overcome **trade barriers**³⁹, manufacturers again chose local production. Nissan opened its Sunderland plant in Britain in 1986, which became one of Europe's most productive car factories. Toyota

¹⁵ to embrace sth *tə ɪm'breɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ* tu: przyjąć coś, zastosować coś

¹⁶ continuous improvement *kən'tɪnjuəs ɪm'pru:vmənt* ciągłe doskonalenie

¹⁷ waste reduction *weɪst rɪ'dʌkʃən* zmniejszanie ilości odpadów

¹⁸ rigorous *'rɪɡərəs* rygorystyczny, surowy

¹⁹ quality control *'kwɒlətɪ kən'trɒl* kontrola jakości

²⁰ to be instrumental in sth *tə bi: ɪn'strə'mentiəl ɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ* odegrać kluczową rolę w czymś

²¹ to pioneer sth *tə ˌpaɪə'niə 'sʌmθɪŋ* wprowadzić coś jako pierwszy, być pionierem czegoś

²² defect *'di:fekt* wada, usterka

²³ stock control *stɒk kən'trɒl* kontrola zapasów, zarządzanie magazynem

²⁴ stockholding *'stɒk'həʊldɪŋ* magazynowanie, utrzymywanie zapasów

²⁵ reliability survey *rɪˌləɪə'bɪlətɪ 'sɜ:veɪ* badanie niezawodności

²⁶ routine maintenance *ru:'ti:n 'meɪntənəns* rutynowa konserwacja, podstawowe przeglądy

²⁷ repair costs *rɪ'peə kɒsts* koszty naprawy

²⁸ to become synonymous with sth *tə bɪ,kʌm sɪ'nɒnɪməs wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ* stać się synonimem czegoś, kojarzyć się z czymś

²⁹ oil shock *ɔɪl ʃɒk* szok naftowy, kryzys paliwowy

³⁰ to excel at sth *tə ɪk'sel æt 'sʌmθɪŋ* wyróżniać się czymś

³¹ household name *'haʊshəʊld neɪm* znana marka, nazwa znana powszechnie

³² import restriction *'ɪmpɔ:t rɪ'strɪkʃən* ograniczenie importu

³³ to halt sth *tə hɔ:lt 'sʌmθɪŋ* zatrzymać, powstrzymać coś

³⁴ import quota *'ɪmpɔ:t 'kwɒtə* kontyngent importowy, limit importu (maksymalny poziom ilościowy określonego towaru, który można sprowadzić z zagranicy w danym okresie)

³⁵ collectively *kə'lektɪvli* łącznie, razem

³⁶ loyal customer base *'lɔɪəl 'kʌstəmə beɪs* lojalna baza klientów

³⁷ market share *'mɑ:kɪt ʃeə* udział w rynku

³⁸ equipment level *'kwɪpmənt 'levl* poziom wyposażenia

³⁹ trade barrier *treɪd 'bæriə* bariera handlowa



Kaizen

Kaizen, meaning continuous improvement, emerged in Japan after the Second World War. Influenced by American quality experts such as W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran, it was adopted enthusiastically by companies including Toyota, Honda and Canon. By encouraging every employee to suggest small, continual improvements, kaizen helped transform Japanese manufacturing into a global **benchmark**¹ for quality, efficiency and reliability.

¹ **benchmark** 'bentʃmɑ:k punkt odniesienia, wzorzec

INFOBOX

established production in both the United Kingdom and France, while Honda manufactured vehicles in Swindon for many years before closing the facility in 2021.

Expansion Throughout Asia

China's rapidly growing economy and domestic market represented the industry's next great opportunity. During the 1990s and early 2000s, Japanese manufacturers formed **joint ventures**⁴⁰ with local companies to **gain access to**⁴¹ the rapidly expanding Chinese market. Toyota, Honda and Nissan enjoyed years of strong growth as millions of Chinese families bought their first cars.

Elsewhere across Southeast Asia, Japanese brands achieved overwhelming dominance. Thailand became a major **production hub**⁴², while Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines all developed large markets for Japanese vehicles. **Pick-up trucks**⁴³, small cars and motorcycles proved especially successful.

By the early 2010s, Japan had become one of the world's **automotive superpowers**⁴⁴. In 2008, Toyota **overtook**⁴⁵ General Motors to become the world's largest **car-maker**⁴⁶, a symbolic moment reflecting decades of sustained growth. Japan continued producing between eight and ten million vehicles annually, with exports reaching every continent.

Clouds Gather

The first serious **warning signs**⁴⁷ appeared during the late 2010s. Although Japanese manufacturers continued producing highly reliable petrol and **hybrid vehicles**⁴⁸, they **underestimated**⁴⁹ how quickly the global market would embrace fully electric cars.

⁴⁰ **joint venture** dʒɔɪnt 'ventʃə wspólne przedsięwzięcie, spółka z kapitałem mieszanym, spółka typu joint venture

⁴¹ **to gain access to sth** tə geɪn 'ækses tə 'sʌmθɪŋ uzyskać dostęp do czegoś

⁴² **production hub** prə'dʌkʃən hʌb centrum produkcji

⁴³ **pick-up truck** 'pɪkʌp trʌk pickup, samochód z kabiną i odkrytą skrzynią ładunkową

⁴⁴ **automotive superpower** ˌɔ:təməʊ'ti:v 'su:pəpaʊə motoryzacyjne mocarstwo

⁴⁵ **to overtake sb/sth** tə ˌəʊvə'teɪk 'sʌmbədi 'sʌmθɪŋ wyprzedzić kogoś/coś

⁴⁶ **car maker** 'kɑ:meɪkə producent samochodów

⁴⁷ **warning sign** 'wɔ:nɪŋ saɪn sygnał ostrzegawczy, znak ostrzegawczy

⁴⁸ **hybrid vehicle** 'haɪbrɪd 'vi:ɪkl pojazd hybrydowy

⁴⁹ **to underestimate sth** tə ˌʌndə'restɪmeɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ nie docenić czegoś, niedoszacować czegoś

Toyota, despite pioneering the hugely successful Prius hybrid in 1997, remained cautious about committing to **battery-electric vehicles**⁶⁰. Its management argued that hybrids, **hydrogen fuel cells**⁶¹ and conventional engines would **coexist**⁶² for many years. Honda and Nissan also invested more slowly than several emerging competitors.

Meanwhile, American manufacturer Tesla demonstrated that electric vehicles could become highly desirable consumer products rather than just **niche**⁶³ environmental purchases.

The Chinese Challenge

Supported by substantial investment, government incentives and complete domestic **supply chains**⁶⁴ for batteries, Chinese manufacturers rapidly improved both quality and technology. Companies including BYD, Geely, Chery, XPeng and NIO now compete aggressively across both domestic and international markets.

China has also become the world's largest producer of electric vehicles and batteries. This shift has transformed **competitive dynamics**⁶⁵. Where Japanese companies once led in manufacturing efficiency, Chinese manufacturers increasingly lead in battery technology, **software integration**⁶⁶ and production costs.

Many Chinese EVs now offer advanced **driver-assistance systems**⁶⁷, long **driving ranges**⁶⁸ and sophisticated digital features at prices that many rivals struggle to match. Consequently, Japanese manufacturers, heavily dependent on petrol and hybrid models, have seen market share **decline**⁶⁹ significantly.

North America, however, remains comparatively **resilient**⁷⁰. Demand for hybrids has strengthened, benefiting Toyota in particular, while larger SUVs and pick-up trucks continue generating strong profits. Nonetheless, competition in the USA continues **intensifying**⁷¹.

⁶⁰ **battery-electric vehicle** 'bætəri ɪˌlektɹɪk 'viːɪkl pojazd w pełni elektryczny (na akumulatory)

⁶¹ **hydrogen fuel cell** 'haɪdrədʒən fjuːəl sel

Can Japan Recover⁶² Its Global Position?

Japan's automotive industry may be **stuck in heavy traffic**⁶³, but it is far from a **write-off**⁶⁴. Japanese companies retain significant advantages.

Their **manufacturing expertise**⁶⁵ remains **world-class**⁶⁶.

Their reputations for reliability remain exceptionally strong.

Dealer networks⁶⁷ **span**⁶⁸ virtually every developed market, while **customer loyalty**⁶⁹ remains high.

Many manufacturers are now investing heavily in **next-generation**⁷⁰ batteries, **software-defined vehicles**⁷¹ and **dedicated electric platforms**⁷².

Toyota alone has announced tens of billions of pounds in **EV**⁷³ and battery investments, while Honda, Nissan and others are expanding electric **model ranges**⁷⁴ and strengthening **battery partnerships**⁷⁵.

Hybrid technology also remains an important competitive advantage. In markets where **charging infrastructure**⁷⁶ remains limited, efficient hybrids continue offering an attractive compromise between conventional petrol cars and full **electrification**⁷⁷.

More Cars on the Road

For Japanese manufacturers, the market is far more crowded and competitive than in the **halcyon days**⁷⁸ of the late 20th

wodorowe ogniwo paliwowe

⁶² **to coexist** 'kəʊɪst współistnieć

⁶³ **niche** 'niːf niszowy

⁶⁴ **supply chain** sə'plaɪ tʃeɪn łańcuch dostaw

⁶⁵ **competitive dynamics** kəmˌpetətɪv daɪˈnæmɪks dynamika konkurencji, układ konkurencyjny

⁶⁶ **software integration** 'sɒftweə ɪnˌtɪˈɡreɪʃən integracja oprogramowania

⁶⁷ **driver-assistance system** 'draɪvər əˌsɪstəns 'sɪstəm system wspomagania kierowcy

⁶⁸ **driving range** 'draɪvɪŋ reɪndʒ tu: zasięg pojazdu

⁶⁹ **to decline** tə dɪˈklaɪn spadać, zmniejszać się

⁷⁰ **resilient** rɪˈzɪliənt odporny, wytrzymały

⁷¹ **to intensify** tə ɪnˈtensɪfaɪ nasilać się, wzmacniać się

⁷² **to recover sth** tə rɪˈkʌvə 'sʌmθɪŋ odzyskać coś



⁶³ **to be stuck in heavy traffic** tə bi stʌk ɪn ˌhevi 'træfɪk **dost. i przen.:** utknąć (w korku)

⁶⁴ **write-off** 'raɪtɒf tu spisanie na straty

⁶⁵ **manufacturing expertise** ˌmænʃʊˈfæktʃərɪŋ ˌekspɜːˈtiːz wiedza i doświadczenie w produkcji

⁶⁶ **world-class** wɜːld klaːs światowej klasy

⁶⁷ **dealer network** 'diːlə 'netwɜːk sieć salonów samochodowych

⁶⁸ **to span sth** tə spæn 'sʌmθɪŋ obejmować coś, rozciągać się na coś

⁶⁹ **customer loyalty** 'kʌstəmə ˌlɔɪəlti lojalność klientów

⁷⁰ **next-generation** ˌnekst dʒenə'reɪʃən nowej generacji, przyszłej generacji

⁷¹ **software-defined vehicle** 'sɒftweə dɪˌfaɪnd 'viːɪkl pojazd, którego funkcje i możliwości są definiowane przez oprogramowanie, samochód sterowany oprogramowaniem

⁷² **dedicated electric platform** 'dedɪkətɪd ɪˌlektɹɪk 'plætfɔːm dedykowana platforma elektryczna

⁷³ **EV (electric vehicle)** ɪː viː ɪˌlektɹɪk 'viːɪkl pojazd elektryczny

⁷⁴ **model range** 'mɒdl reɪndʒ gama modeli

⁷⁵ **battery partnership** 'bætəri ˌpɑːtnəʃɪp partnerstwo w zakresie baterii

⁷⁶ **charging infrastructure** 'tʃɑːdʒɪŋ ɪnˈfræstrʌktʃə infrastruktura ładowania

⁷⁷ **electrification** ɪˌlektɹɪfɪˈkeɪʃən elektryfikacja

⁷⁸ **halcyon days** 'hælsɪən deɪz złote czasy, spokojne i szczęśliwe dni



THE MARKET IS FAR MORE CROWDED AND COMPETITIVE THAN IN THE HALCYON DAYS OF THE LATE 20TH CENTURY.



PASSIVE POWER

Complete the sentences using the correct passive form of the verb in brackets.

1. In the early 1970s, Japanese export models _____ (criticise) for lacking refinement and quality.
2. Production methods pioneered by Toyota ensured that defects _____ (reduce) significantly across factories.
3. Import restrictions _____ (introduce) by the US in the 1980s, which led Japanese carmakers to build local plants.
4. Today, millions of vehicles _____ (produce) annually by Japanese companies across North America.
5. Sunderland in Britain _____ (choose) as the location for Nissan's major European manufacturing facility.
6. For years, petrol and hybrid vehicles _____ (manufacture) by Japanese companies as they remained cautious about fully electric cars.
7. Electric vehicle development _____ (support) heavily by Chinese government incentives over recent years.
8. Next-generation platforms _____ (develop) currently by Toyota and Honda to regain competitive strength.

BEM TEST

Answers: 1. were criticised, 2. were reduced, 3. were introduced, 4. are produced, 5. was chosen, 6. were manufactured, 7. has been supported, 8. are being developed

century. Rather than dominating every major market, Japan may need to accept a future in which global production is shared more evenly between traditional manufacturers and rapidly growing Chinese competitors.

However, the Japanese have proved time and time again their ability to adapt and come back even stronger. Their car manufacturers have **taken a big hit**⁷⁹ from their neighbours, but don't expect them to **disappear into the sunset**⁸⁰ – it is, after all, **the land of the rising sun**⁸¹.

⁷⁹ to take a hit *tə teɪk ə hit* dostać mocno po kieszeni, ponieść straty

⁸⁰ to disappear into the sunset *ˌdɪsəˈpiər ˌɪntə ðə ˈsʌnset* odejść w zapomnienie, zniknąć z areny

⁸¹ the land of the rising sun *ðə lænd ʌv ðə ˈraɪzɪŋ sʌn* Kraj Wschodzącego Słońca, Japonia

A World Cup Reality Check

The 2026 FIFA World Cup brought millions of football fans to the USA, but some of the most **jaw-dropping**¹ moments had nothing to do with the matches. **Nab**² your tickets as BEM's **Jonathan Sidor** explores the biggest US culture shocks foreigners **took note of**³.

This past summer, social media feeds were **teeming with**⁴ videos of **bewildered**⁵ visitors getting a **first-hand**⁶ experience of American life. For tourists from Europe and elsewhere, everyday life in the USA proved just as memorable as the tournament itself. From **marvelling at**⁷ **free drink refills**⁸ to **gasping at**⁹ supermarket prices, here's a **round-up**¹⁰ of the American **quirks**¹¹ that caused the loudest **commotion**¹².

Size Matters

In America, everything seems **super-sized**¹³. This is one stereotype that **refuses to die**¹⁴. Visitors in 2026 were struck by the **sheer**¹⁵ scale of almost everything around

them. Highways **stretch**¹⁶ endlessly across the landscape, family **pickup trucks**¹⁷ look more like military vehicles, and **grocery stores**¹⁸ closely **resemble**¹⁹ aircraft hangars.

Distances also **caught many fans off guard**²⁰. On a map, travelling from one

³ to take note of sth *tə teɪk 'nəʊt ɒv 'sʌmθɪŋ* zwrócić uwagę na coś, zauważyć coś

⁴ to teem with sth *tə ti:m wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ* roić się od czegoś

⁵ bewildered *bɪ'wɪldəd* dezorientowany, oszołomiony

⁶ first-hand *ˌfɜːst 'hænd* bezpośredni, z pierwszej ręki

⁷ to marvel at sth *tə 'mɑːvl æt 'sʌmθɪŋ* zachwycać się czymś

⁸ free refill *friː 'riːfɪl* darmowa dolewka (napoju)

⁹ to gasp at sth *tə ɡɑːsp æt 'sʌmθɪŋ* łapać oddech na widok czegoś, zaniemówić z wrażenia

¹⁰ round-up *'raʊnd ʌp* przegląd, podsumowanie

¹¹ quirk *kwɜːk* dziwactwo, osobliwość

¹² commotion *kə'məʊʃn* zamieszanie, poruszenie

¹³ supersized *'suːpəsaɪzd* bardzo duży, ponadwymiarowy

¹⁴ to refuse to die *tə rɪˌfjuːz tə 'daɪ tuː* nie chce odejść w niepamięć, wciąż pozostawać aktualnym

¹⁵ sheer *ʃɪə tuː* absolutny, całkowity

¹⁶ to stretch *tə streɪtʃ tuː* ciągnąć się, rozciągać się

¹⁷ pickup truck *'pɪkʌp trʌk* pick-up (samochód z odkrytą skrzynią ładunkową)

¹⁸ grocery store *'ɡrəʊsəri stɔː* sklep spożywczy

¹⁹ to resemble sth *tə rɪˈzeɪbl 'sʌmθɪŋ* przypominać coś

²⁰ to catch sb off guard *tə kætʃ 'sʌmbədi ɒf ɡɑːd* zaskoczyć kogoś

THE SNACK THAT GRABBED THE MOST HEADLINES WAS RANCH DRESSING, A CREAMY CONCOCTION THAT BLENDS BUTTERMILK, HERBS, AND SPICES INTO A DE FACTO NATIONAL DIPPING SAUCE.

¹ jaw-dropping *'dʒɔː drɒpɪŋ* zapierający dech w piersiach, oszałamiający

² to nab sth *tə nəb 'sʌmθɪŋ tuː* złapać, chwycić coś



A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

serendipitous
/,serən'dɪpɪtəs/
nieoczekiwany,
przypadkowy,
sprawiający miłą
niespodziankę

host city²¹ to another can look **deceptively**²² simple, but the reality is another story. Flying from New York to Los Angeles, for example, **covers**²³ roughly the same distance as a flight between Lisbon and Moscow, which takes you across roughly 10 international borders. Many supporters quickly learnt that in the United States, “just around the corner²⁴” can mean another hour by car.

The obsession with size isn't limited to buildings and vehicles. A regular cup of coffee **could be construed as**²⁵ a small bucket, restaurant portions often arrive **piled high**²⁶ enough to feed a family, and **household appliances**²⁷ seem built on a grand scale. For fans arriving from countries where space is limited and efficiency is **prized**²⁸, the “bigger is better” **mindset**²⁹ is impossible to miss. In the USA, even the ordinary feels **oversized**³⁰.

A Culinary Mecca

American cuisine **swiftly**³¹ became one of the competition's **serendipitous**³² **highlights**³³. Many international guests treated famous restaurant chains like must-see attractions. While locals may **take the likes of** Waffle House, In-N-Out Burger, or Chick-fil-A **for granted**³⁴, visitors were **tickling them off**³⁵ their cultural **bucket lists**³⁶. These were **locales**³⁷ they had seen **hyped**³⁸ in films, television shows, and online videos for years but had never experienced themselves. **To sweeten the pot**³⁹, free drink refills seemed almost too generous to be real, and **complimentary**⁴⁰ ice-filled cups came with every soft drink.

American barbecue **left a lasting impression**⁴¹. **Slow-cooked**⁴² **brisket**⁴³, **smoky**⁴⁴ **pulled pork**⁴⁵, and **ribs**⁴⁶ that **fell off the bone**⁴⁷ convinced many visitors that barbecue was more of a regional tradition than a simple meal. Others fell in love with **staples**⁴⁸ like enormous **deli**⁴⁹ sandwiches, peanut butter treats, and classic **diner**⁵⁰ breakfasts served at any hour. The snack that **grabbed the most headlines**⁵¹ was **ranch dressing**⁵², a creamy **concoction**⁵³ that **blends**⁵⁴ **buttermilk**⁵⁵, herbs, and spices into a de facto national **dipping sauce**⁵⁶.

Americans add it to everything from carrots and chips to pizza and chicken wings, **signifying**⁵⁷ their **love affair**⁵⁸ with bold – **albeit**⁵⁹ often unhealthy – flavours.

Not every **morsel**⁶⁰ was a pleasant surprise, though. Many **lamented**⁶¹ that fresh fruits and vegetables were relatively hard **to come by**⁶² in restaurants. When present, they typically cost more than expected. **Generally speaking**⁶³, even quick meals or small grocery purchases **carried a hefty bill**⁶⁴. For travellers with memories of inexpensive burgers and other goodies from Hollywood in their heads, the final **receipt**⁶⁵ was frequently **a rude awakening**⁶⁶.

Commonplace⁶⁷ Convenience

Tourists tended to notice that America was designed to remove as many **obstacles**⁶⁸ as possible from daily life. **Drive-throughs**⁶⁹ are everywhere, and we're not just talking about fast food and coffee. Pharmacies, banks, and even grocery stores have driver-friendly options.

²¹ host city hæʊst 'siti miasto-gospodarz

²² deceptively dr'septɪvli zwodniczo, pozornie

²³ to cover sth tə 'kʌvə 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: obejmować, pokrywać coś

²⁴ just around the corner dʒʌst ə'raʊnd ðə 'kɔ:nə tu:ż za rogiem

²⁵ to be construed as sth tə bi kən'stru:d əz 'sʌmθɪŋ być uważanym za coś

²⁶ piled high paɪld haɪ ułożony w stos

²⁷ household appliance 'haʊshəʊld ə'plaɪəns urządzenie gospodarstwa domowego, sprzęt AGD

²⁸ prized praɪzd wysoko ceniony

²⁹ mindset 'maɪndset sposób myślenia, mentalność

³⁰ oversized ˌəʊvə'saɪzd zbyt duży, ponadgabarytowy

³¹ swiftly 'swɪftli szybko, błyskawicznie

³² serendipitous ˌserən'dɪpɪtəs nieoczekiwany, przypadkowy, sprawiający miłą niespodziankę

³³ highlight 'haɪlaɪt główna atrakcja

³⁴ to take sth for granted tə teɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ fə 'grɑ:ntɪd traktować coś jako oczywiste, brać

coś za pewnik

³⁵ to tick sth off tə tɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ of odhaczać coś (na liście)

³⁶ bucket list 'bʌkɪt lɪst lista rzeczy do zrobienia

³⁷ locale læʊ'kɑ:l miejsce, lokalizacja

³⁸ hyped haɪpt reklamowany, nagłośniony

³⁹ to sweeten the pot tə 'swi:tən ðə pɒt tu: uczynić ofertę bardziej atrakcyjną

⁴⁰ complimentary ˌkɒmplɪ'mentəri tu: bezpłatny, gratis

⁴¹ to leave a lasting impression tə li:v ə 'lɑ:stɪŋ ɪm'preʃn wywrzeć trwałe wrażenie

⁴² slow-cooked sləʊ kʊkt wolno gotowany

⁴³ brisket 'brɪskɪt mostek wołowy

⁴⁴ smoky 'sməʊki wędzony, z posmakiem dymu

⁴⁵ pulled pork pʊld pɔ:k szarpana wieprzowina

⁴⁶ ribs rɪbz żeberka

⁴⁷ to fall off the bone tə fɔ:l ɒf ðə bəʊn odpadać od kości (o mięsie)

⁴⁸ staple 'steɪpl tu: podstawa, klasyka

⁴⁹ deli 'deli delikatesowy

⁵⁰ diner 'daɪnə AmE tania restauracja (często przy autostradzie)

⁵¹ to grab headlines tə græb 'hedlaɪnz przyciągać uwagę mediów

⁵² ranch dressing ˌrɑ:ntʃ 'dresɪŋ sos ranch (amerykański sos na bazie maślanek i ziół)

⁵³ concoction kən'kɒkʃn mikstura, mieszanka

⁵⁴ to blend tə blend mieszać, łączyć

⁵⁵ buttermilk 'bʌtəmlɪk maślanek

⁵⁶ dipping sauce 'dɪpɪŋ sɔ:s sos do maczania

⁵⁷ to signify sth tə 'sɪgnɪfaɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: świadczyć o czymś

⁵⁸ love affair with sth lʌv ə'feə wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: romans, zamięrowanie do czegoś

⁵⁹ albeit ɔ:l'bi:t aczkolwiek

⁶⁰ morsel 'mɔ:səl kęs

⁶¹ to lament tə lə'ment ubolewać, narzekać

⁶² to come by sth tə kʌm baɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ zdobyć coś, natknąć się na coś

⁶³ generally speaking 'dʒenrəli 'spi:kɪŋ ogólnie rzecz biorąc

⁶⁴ to carry a hefty bill tə 'kæri ə 'hefti bɪl kosztować sporo

⁶⁵ receipt ri'si:t paragon

⁶⁶ a rude awakening ə ru:d ə'weɪkənɪŋ bolesne otrzeźwienie, przykry szok

⁶⁷ commonplace 'kɒmənpleɪs powszechny, codzienny

⁶⁸ obstacle 'ɒbstəkl przeszkoda

⁶⁹ drive-through 'draɪv θru: obsługa z okienka dla zmotoryzowanych

IT'S NOW THE NORM FOR ALL SORTS OF BUSINESSES TO PRESENT SHOPPERS WITH PAYMENT TERMINALS SUGGESTING TIPS OF 15 PERCENT, 20 PERCENT, OR EVEN 25 PERCENT AND HIGHER.

Air conditioning⁷⁰ blasts⁷¹ from shops, hotels, and public transport, providing welcome relief⁷² from the summer heat.

Shops often stay open late into the evening, while enormous convenience stores⁷³ stock almost everything imaginable under one roof⁷⁴. Perhaps the ultimate symbol of America's "always on"⁷⁵ culture is Buc-ee's, a chain of colossal⁷⁶ highway petrol stations⁷⁷ that look more like self-sustaining⁷⁸ shopping malls. With hundreds of fuel pumps⁷⁹, spotless⁸⁰ restrooms⁸¹, freshly prepared⁸² food, and shelves packed with everything from snacks to souvenirs, Buc-ee's can feel almost surreal⁸³ to European visitors. For many tourists, the country feels permanently⁸⁴ switched on⁸⁵, operating at full speed⁸⁶ regardless of⁸⁷ the hour.

This convenience, however, comes with a trade-off⁸⁸. In many cities, walking is surprisingly difficult outside downtown⁸⁹ areas. Visitors accustomed to⁹⁰ strolling⁹¹ through compact⁹² European city centres usually discover that owning a car in much of America isn't merely convenient – it's essential.

⁷⁰ air conditioning eə kən'diʃənɪŋ klimatyzacja

⁷¹ to blast tə blɑːst tu: dmuchać

⁷² relief rɪ'liːf ulga

⁷³ convenience store kən'viːniəns stɔː mały



sklep handlujący głównie towarami na bieżące potrzeby

⁷⁴ under one roof 'ʌndə wʌn ru:f pod jednym dachem

⁷⁵ always on 'ɔːlweɪz ɒn zawsze aktywny, działający non-stop

⁷⁶ colossal kə'ləsəl kolosalny, ogromny

⁷⁷ petrol station 'petrəl ,steɪʃn stacja benzynowa

⁷⁸ self-sustaining ,self sə'steɪnɪŋ samowystarczalny

⁷⁹ fuel pump 'fjuːəl pʌmp dystrybutor paliwa

⁸⁰ spotless 'spɒtləs nieskazitelnie czysty

⁸¹ restroom 'restruːm AmE toaleta

⁸² freshly prepared 'frefli prɪ'peəd świeżo przygotowany

⁸³ surreal sə'reɪəl surrealistyczny, nierealny

⁸⁴ permanently 'pɜːmənəntli permanentnie, stale

⁸⁵ switched on swɪtʃt ɒn tu: włączony, działający

⁸⁶ at full speed æt fʊl spiːd z pełną prędkością, pełną parą

⁸⁷ regardless of X rɪ'gɔːdləs ɒv eks bez względu na X

⁸⁸ trade-off 'treɪd ɒf kompromis, ustępstwo

⁸⁹ downtown ,daʊn'taʊn centrum miasta

⁹⁰ to be accustomed to sth tə bi ə'kʌstəmd tə 'sʌməθɪŋ być przyzwyczajonym do czegoś

⁹¹ to stroll tə strɔːl spacerować

⁹² compact kəm'pækt tu: zwarty, niewielki

Premium⁹³ Price Tags⁹⁴

Perhaps last summer's greatest surprise arrived at the **cash register**⁹⁵. Unlike in many European countries, displayed prices usually don't include **sales tax**⁹⁶. As a result, products advertised for USD 20 rarely cost exactly USD 20, leaving tourists **scrambling to perform**⁹⁷ **quick mental arithmetic**⁹⁸ before **forking over**⁹⁹ the correct amount at **checkout**¹⁰⁰.

Then comes the question of tipping. Football **aficionados**¹⁰¹ **from near and far**¹⁰² were left wondering how much they were **supposed to pay**¹⁰³ for various services. It's now **the norm**¹⁰⁴ for all sorts of businesses to present shoppers with **payment terminals**¹⁰⁵ suggesting tips of 15 percent, 20 percent, or even 25 percent and higher. These requests can **pop up**¹⁰⁶ after purchasing little more than a coffee or a bottle of water. For visitors from countries where tipping is modest or entirely optional, the experience might feel awkward, to say the least.

In **full-service**¹⁰⁷ restaurants, however, tipping is more than a polite gesture – it's practically **obligatory**¹⁰⁸. A tip **makes up**¹⁰⁹ an important part of many servers' income, so not leaving a tip at all can **arouse**¹¹⁰ **its fair share of dirty looks**¹¹¹. Of course, most visitors are happy to **oblige**¹¹² once they understand the custom. Still, it can take more than a few meals to **master**¹¹³ the **unwritten rules**¹¹⁴ of American dining.

A World of Wonder

Whether it was **sticker shock**¹¹⁵ or the **delectable**¹¹⁶ taste of some local dish, America's World Cup brought visitors a **plethora**¹¹⁷ of **eyebrow-raising**¹¹⁸ experiences. Some cultural **oddities**¹¹⁹ may have been tough to **grasp**¹²⁰, but foreigners **by and large**¹²¹ came to **embrace**¹²² the USA's **eccentricities**¹²³. The World Cup is all about **building bridges**¹²⁴, and the **exposure**¹²⁵ it brought to some of the country's **less-known**¹²⁶ qualities surely won't be forgotten any time soon.

⁹³ **premium** 'pri:miəm **tu:** z wyższej półki

⁹⁴ **price tag** prais tæg metka z ceną, cena

⁹⁵ **cash register** kæʃ 'redʒɪstə kasa (w sklepie)

⁹⁶ **sales tax** seɪlz tæks podatek od

sprzedaży

⁹⁷ **to scramble to do sth** tə 'skræmbl tə du:

'sʌmθɪŋ **gorączkowo się starać coś zrobić**

⁹⁸ **mental arithmetic** 'mentl ə'riθmətɪk rachunki

w pamięci

⁹⁹ **to fork over sth** tə fɔ:k ə'səvə 'sʌmθɪŋ **wyłożyć**

pieniądz na coś

¹⁰⁰ **checkout** 'tʃekʌʊt kasa (w sklepie), płatność

¹⁰¹ **aficionado** ə,fɪjə'nɑ:dəʊ entuzjasta, miłośnik

¹⁰² **from near and far** frəm nɪə ənd fɑ: z bliska

i z daleka

¹⁰³ **to be supposed to do sth** tə bi sə'pəʊzd tə

du: 'sʌmθɪŋ **być zobowiązanym coś zrobić,**

mieć coś zrobić

¹⁰⁴ **the norm** ðə nɔ:m norma

¹⁰⁵ **payment terminal** 'peɪmənt 'tɜ:mɪnəl terminal

płatniczy

¹⁰⁶ **to pop up** tə pɒp ʌp **pojawić się nagle**

¹⁰⁷ **full-service** ,fʊl 'sɜ:vɪs z pełną obsługą

¹⁰⁸ **obligatory** ə'blɪɡətəri **obowiązkowy**

¹⁰⁹ **to make up sth** tə meɪk ʌp 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu:**

stanowić coś

¹¹⁰ **to arouse** tə ə'raʊz **wzbudzić**

¹¹¹ **its fair share of sth** ɪts feə ʃeə əv 'sʌmθɪŋ

spora dawka czegoś

¹¹² **to oblige** tə ə'blaɪdʒ **zgodzić się na coś,**

uczynić zadość

¹¹³ **to master sth** tə 'mɑ:stə 'sʌmθɪŋ **opanować**

coś

¹¹⁴ **unwritten rule** ʌn,rɪtɪn ru:l **niepisana zasada**

¹¹⁵ **sticker shock** 'stɪkə ʃɒk **szok cenowy**

¹¹⁶ **delectable** dɪ'lektəbl **wysmienity, pyszny**

¹¹⁷ **plethora** 'pleθərə **mnóstwo, nadmiar**

¹¹⁸ **eyebrow-raising** 'aɪbrəʊ ,reɪzɪŋ **budzący**

zdziwienie

¹¹⁹ **oddity** 'ɒdətɪ **dziwactwo, osobliwość**

¹²⁰ **to grasp sth** tə grɑ:sp 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu:** **zrozumieć,**

pojąć coś

¹²¹ **by and large** baɪ ənd lɑ:dʒ **ogólnie rzecz**

biorąc, w sumie

¹²² **to embrace sth** tə ɪm'breɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ **tu:**

przyjąć, zaakceptować coś

¹²³ **eccentricity** ,eksən'trɪsətɪ **ekscentryczność,**

dziwactwo

¹²⁴ **to build bridges** tə bɪld 'brɪdʒɪz **budować**

mosty, zbliżać ludzi

¹²⁵ **exposure** ɪk'spəʊʒə **tu:** **ekspozycja,**

pokazanie

¹²⁶ **lesser-known** ,lesə 'nəʊn **mniej znany**

POBIERZ

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A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

commensurate
/kə'menʃəreɪt/
współmierny,
proporcjonalny



The Rhetoric¹ and the Reality: Why Skills- Based Hiring Remains More Promise than Practice

Seventy percent of employers now claim to **recruit on competencies**² rather than **credentials**³, yet fewer than one in 700 new hires at firms that removed **degree requirements**⁴ actually lack a **bachelor's qualification**⁵.

The Policy-Practice Chasm

Between 2018 and early 2024, the share of American job postings **explicitly** requiring a university degree fell from roughly 20 percent to 17.8 percent, while vacancies with no stated education requirement climbed to

52 percent. On the surface, this suggests a fundamental **recalibration**⁶ of hiring criteria. **Dig deeper**⁷ and a different picture emerges. Research from Harvard Business School and the Burning Glass Institute tracked companies that publicly eliminated **degree stipulations**⁸ and found that the actual proportion of

rhetoric 'retərɪk *tu:* deklaracje, słowa
to recruit on competencies *tu n'krut on*
 'kɒmpɪtənsɪz rekrutować na podstawie kompetencji
credentials *kri'denʃəlz* kwalifikacje formalne
degree requirement *di'gri: ri'kwajəmənt* wymóg
 posiadania wyższego wykształcenia
bachelor's qualification 'bætʃələz ,kwɒlɪfɪ'keɪʃən

tytuł licencjata
explicitly ɪk'splɪsɪtli wyraźnie
recalibration ,ri:,kæli'breɪʃən *tu:* gruntowna
 zmiana, przeformułowanie
to dig deeper *tu dig 'di:pə* przyjrzeć się bliżej
degree stipulation *di'gri: ,stɪpjə'leɪʃən* wymóg
 formalny dotyczący wykształcenia

non-graduate hires rose by just two percentage points. The vast majority of new employees still held bachelor's qualifications, degree requirements or no degree requirements.

This gap between rhetoric and outcome reveals something more instructive than hypocrisy. It exposes the formidable operational challenge of **assessing competency at scale**¹⁰. Degrees have long served as a crude but efficient **sorting mechanism**¹¹, a **shorthand**¹² for cognitive ability, perseverance and **cultural fit**¹³. Replacing that signal requires new tools, new processes and, crucially, new confidence among hiring managers that a candidate's **portfolio**¹⁴ or **certificate**¹⁵ genuinely predicts performance. Most organisations have updated their policies faster than their practices.

The uncomfortable truth is that eliminating degree requirements has proved far easier than building the **infrastructure**¹⁶ to assess what candidates can actually do. Screening by skills demands standardised **competency tests**¹⁷, validated **work samples**¹⁸ and **interview protocols**¹⁹ grounded in **observable behaviours**²¹ rather than **academic pedigree**²². It also requires recruiters to surrender the **cognitive ease**²³ of a **binary filter**²⁴ – degree or no degree – in favour of **nuanced judgement**²⁵. That shift takes time, training and technology that many firms have yet to deploy.

Why the Shift Gained Momentum

Three forces converged to push skills-based hiring from the periphery to the mainstream. The first was **labour scarcity**²⁶. In sectors from software engineering to logistics, employers found themselves unable to **fill vacancies**²⁷ using traditional criteria. The **talent pool**²⁸ of computer science graduates could not meet the demand for **cybersecurity analysts**²⁹ or **cloud architects**³⁰, prompting firms to look beyond alma mater and towards **demonstrable capability**³¹. Delta Air Lines, for instance, removed degree requirements for numerous operational and technical roles, recognising that former military personnel

and **vocational trainees**³² often possessed the precision and discipline the work demanded.

The second driver was technological disruption. Artificial intelligence and automation have **rewritten**³³ **job descriptions**³⁴ faster than universities can **adapt curricula**³⁵. By early 2026, more than a third of **entry-level positions**³⁶ required some

¹⁰ to assess competency at scale *tə ə'ses*

'kɒmpɪtənsi ət skeɪl **oceniać kompetencje na masową skalę**

¹¹ sorting mechanism *'sɔ:tɪŋ 'mekənɪzəm* **mechanizm selekcji**

¹² shorthand *'ʃɔ:θænd* **tu: skrót myślowy, uproszczenie**

¹³ cultural fit *'kʌltʃərəl fɪt* **dopasowanie kulturowe (do firmy)**

¹⁴ portfolio *pɔ:t'fəʊliəʊ* **tu: zbiór prac, dorobek**

¹⁵ certificate *sə'tɪfɪkət* **tu: certyfikat zawodowy**

¹⁶ infrastructure *'ɪnfəstrʌktʃə* **tu: system, struktura**

¹⁷ competency test *'kɒmpɪtənsi test* **test kompetencji**

¹⁸ work sample *wɜ:k 'sɑ:mpl* **próbka pracy**

¹⁹ interview protocol *'ɪntəvjʊ: 'prəʊtəkol* **schemat rozmowy kwalifikacyjnej**

²⁰ grounded in sth *'graʊndɪd ɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ* **oparty na czymś**

²¹ observable behaviour *əb'zɜ:vəbəl br'heɪvjə* **obserwowalne zachowanie**

²² academic pedigree *ækə'demɪk 'pedɪgri:* **rodzód akademicki, prestiżowe wykształcenie**

²³ cognitive ease *'kɒgnɪtɪv i:z* **łatwość poznawcza, wygoda myślowa**

²⁴ binary filter *'baɪnəri 'fɪltə* **filtr binarny, kryterium tak-nie**

²⁵ nuanced judgement *'nju:ɑ:nst 'dʒʌdʒmənt* **ocena uwzględniająca niuanse**

²⁶ labour scarcity *'leɪbə 'skeəsəti* **niedobór pracowników**

²⁷ to fill a vacancy *tə fɪl ə 'veɪkənsi* **zapełnić wakat, obsadzić stanowisko**

²⁸ talent pool *'tælənt pu:l* **pula talentów, zasoby ludzkie**

²⁹ cybersecurity analyst *'saɪbəseɪ'kjʊərəti 'ænalɪst* **analityk cyberbezpieczeństwa**

³⁰ cloud architect *klaʊd 'ɑ:kɪtekt* **architekt chmury (specjalista od rozwiązań chmurowych)**

³¹ demonstrable capability *dɪ'mɒnstrəbəl*

keɪpə'bɪləti **udowodnione umiejętności**

³² vocational trainee *vəʊ'keɪʃənəl treɪ'ni:* **absolwent szkolnictwa zawodowego**

³³ to rewrite sth *tə ,ri:'raɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ* **tu: całkowicie coś zmienić**

³⁴ job description *dʒɒb dɪ'skrɪpʃən* **opis stanowiska**

³⁵ to adapt a curriculum *tə ə'dæpt ə kə'rɪkjʊləm* **dostosować program nauczania**

³⁶ entry-level position *'entri ,levəl pə'zɪʃən* **stanowisko dla początkujących**

THE SKILLS-FIRST TOOLKIT

- Structured behavioural interviews that **probe**¹ specific competencies rather than **general suitability**²
- Practical work samples and simulations that **mirror**³ actual job tasks **under realistic conditions**⁴
- Digital portfolios hosted on platforms such as GitHub, Behance or personal websites
- Microcredentials and professional certificates from providers including Coursera, edX and Google Career Certificates
- **Competency-based assessment**⁵ software that scores candidates on demonstrated skills rather than **CV keywords**⁶

¹ to probe sth *tə prəʊb 'sʌmθɪŋ* **badać coś, sondować coś**

² general suitability *'dʒenərəl ,su:tə'bɪləti* **ogólna przydatność**

³ to mirror sth *tə 'mɪrə 'sʌmθɪŋ* **odzworowywać coś**

⁴ under realistic conditions *'ʌndə ,rɪə'lɪstɪk kən'dɪʃənz* **w realistycznych warunkach**

⁵ competency-based assessment *'kɒmpɪtənsi beɪst ə'sesmənt* **ocena na podstawie kompetencji**

⁶ CV keyword *si: vi: 'ki:wɜ:d* **kluczowe słowo w CV**

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facility with³⁷ AI tools, nearly triple the share reported in autumn 2025. Traditional degrees rarely equipped graduates with these competencies; instead, professionals acquired them through online bootcamps, vendor certifications³⁸ and hands-on experimentation³⁹. Employers began to value a portfolio of Python projects or a credential from Coursera more highly than a transcript⁴⁰ from a mid-tier institution⁴¹.

The third factor was a growing scepticism about the signalling power⁴² of degrees themselves. Grade inflation⁴³, variable academic standards and the proliferation of for-profit universities⁴⁴ eroded confidence⁴⁵ that a bachelor's qualification reliably indicated readiness for complex work. In 2019, 73 percent of employers used grade point average⁴⁶ as a screening tool⁴⁷; by 2026, just 42 percent did so. McKinsey research suggested that hiring for skills was five times more predictive of⁴⁸ job performance⁴⁹ than hiring for education, and more than twice as effective as selecting candidates based on prior work experience⁵⁰. The data made a compelling case for change.

How Companies Are Adapting Recruitment

Organisations serious about competency-based hiring have overhauled⁵¹ their selection processes⁵². Eighty-seven percent now incorporate skills assessment⁵³ during interviews, while 65 percent screen for⁵⁴ specific competencies before inviting candidates to interview at all. Google, which famously eliminated degree requirements for many roles years ago, relies on structured behavioural interviews⁵⁵ and coding exercises⁵⁶ that simulate actual job tasks. Candidates might spend an afternoon debugging software⁵⁷ or designing

³⁷ facility with sth fə'sɪləti wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ biegłość w czymś, umiejętność obsługi

³⁸ vendor certification 'vendə ,sɜ:tɪfɪ'keɪʃən certyfikat producenta (oprogramowania)

³⁹ hands-on experimentation ,hændz 'ɒn ɪk'sperɪmən'teɪʃən praktyczne eksperymenty

⁴⁰ transcript 'trænskɪpt tu: odpis ocen,



świadcstwo ukończenia studiów

⁴¹ mid-tier institution mɪd tiə ,ɪnstɪ'tju:ʃən uczelnia średniej rangi

⁴² signalling power 'sɪgnəlɪŋ 'paʊə moc sygnalizacyjna, wartość jako wskaźnika

⁴³ grade inflation greɪd ɪn'fleɪʃən inflacja ocen (nadmiernie łagodne ocenianie)

⁴⁴ for-profit university fə 'prɒfɪt ,ju:nɪ'vɜ:səti uczelnia nastawiona na zysk

⁴⁵ to erode confidence tə ɪ'rəʊd 'kɒnfɪdəns podważyć zaufanie

⁴⁶ grade point average greɪd pɔɪnt 'ævərɪdʒ średnia ocen

⁴⁷ screening tool 'skri:nɪŋ tu:l narzędzie selekcji

⁴⁸ predictive of sth prɪ'dɪktɪv ɒv 'sʌmθɪŋ predykcyjny wobec czegoś, pozwalający przewidzieć coś

⁴⁹ job performance dʒɒb pə'fɔ:məns wyniki w pracy, wydajność

⁵⁰ prior work experience 'praɪə wɜ:k ɪk'spɪəriəns wcześniejsze doświadczenie zawodowe

⁵¹ to overhaul sth tə ,əʊvə'hoʊl 'sʌmθɪŋ gruntownie przebudować coś

⁵² selection process sɪ'lekʃən 'prəʊses proces selekcji, rekrutacji

⁵³ skills assessment skɪlz ə'sesmənt ocena umiejętności

⁵⁴ to screen for sth tə skri:n fɔ: 'sʌmθɪŋ sprawdzać pod kątem czegoś, badać na obecność czegoś

⁵⁵ structured behavioural interview 'strʌktʃəd bɪ'heɪvjərəl ɪntəvju: wywiad ustrukturyzowany, wywiad standaryzowany

⁵⁶ coding exercise 'kəʊdɪŋ 'eksəsaɪz ćwiczenie z programowania

⁵⁷ to debug software tə ,di:'bʌg 'sɒftweə szukać i usuwać błędy w oprogramowaniu

SMALL BUSINESS LEAPS AHEAD

While large corporations dominate headlines, small enterprises¹ have moved faster on skills-first hiring. AI adoption among small businesses reached 76 percent in early 2026, with many using machine learning tools to screen candidates based on task performance rather than qualifications. Freed from legacy HR systems² and risk-averse cultures³, smaller firms experiment more readily with alternative credentials and practical testing.

¹ small enterprise smɔ:l 'entəpraɪz małe przedsiębiorstwo

² legacy HR system 'legəsi eɪtʃ ə: 'sɪstəm przestarzały system HR

³ risk-averse culture rɪsk ə'vɜ:s 'kʌltʃə kultura unikania ryzyka

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a **user interface**⁶⁸, evaluated not on where they studied but on the **elegance**⁶⁹ and effectiveness of their solutions.

Work samples and **practical tests**⁶⁰ have become standard in fields from graphic design to financial modelling. A candidate for a marketing role might be asked to draft a **campaign brief**⁶¹; an aspiring **data analyst**⁶² to **clean a messy dataset**⁶³ and present insights. These exercises offer a direct window into capability that a CV cannot provide. **Digital portfolios**⁶⁴, meanwhile, allow candidates to **showcase**⁶⁵ prior projects, **client testimonials**⁶⁶ and **measurable outcomes**⁶⁷. A **web developer**⁶⁸ can link to live sites they built; a journalist to published articles. The portfolio becomes the credential.

Alternative qualifications⁶⁹ have proliferated to meet this demand. Microcredentials, **professional certificates**⁷⁰ and **digital badges**⁷¹ now populate

LinkedIn profiles alongside traditional degrees. The release of Open Badges 3.0 in 2023 provided a **standardised framework**⁷² for verifying these credentials, making it easier for employers to trust their authenticity. Platforms such as Coursera, edX and Udacity partner with corporations to design curricula **tailored to**⁷³ **industry needs**⁷⁴, often co-taught by practitioners. IBM, Google and Bank of America have

⁶⁸ **user interface** 'ju:zə 'ɪntəfeɪs **interfejs użytkownika**

⁶⁹ **elegance** 'eləgəns **tu: elegancja, prostota rozwiązania**

⁶⁰ **practical test** 'præktɪkəl test **test praktyczny**

⁶¹ **campaign brief** kæm'peɪn bri:f **krótki opis kampanii reklamowej**

⁶² **data analyst** 'dɜ:tə 'ænəlɪst **analityk danych**

⁶³ **to clean a dataset** tə kli:n ə 'dɜ:taset **oczyścić zbiór danych**

⁶⁴ **digital portfolio** ,dɪdʒɪtəl pɔ:t'fəʊliəʊ **cyfrowe portfolio**

⁶⁵ **to showcase sth** tə 'ʃəʊkeɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ **zaprezentować, pokazać coś**

⁶⁶ **client testimonial** 'klaɪənt ,testɪ'məʊniəl **referencje od klienta**

⁶⁷ **measurable outcome** 'meʒərəbəl 'aʊtkʌm **mierzalny rezultat**

⁶⁸ **web developer** web dɪ'veləpə **programista stron internetowych**

⁶⁹ **alternative qualification** ɔ:l'tɜ:nətɪv ,kwɒlɪfɪ'keɪʃən **alternatywne kwalifikacje**

⁷⁰ **professional certificate** prə'feʃənəl sə'tɪfɪkət **certyfikat zawodowy**

⁷¹ **digital badge** 'dɪdʒɪtəl bædʒ **cyfrowa odznaka (potwierdzająca kompetencje)**

⁷² **standardised framework** 'stændədaɪzd 'freɪmwɜ:k **ustandaryzowane ramy**

⁷³ **tailored to sth** 'teɪləd tə 'sʌmθɪŋ **dostosowany do czegoś**

⁷⁴ **industry needs** 'ɪndəstri ni:dz **potrzeby branży**



all launched or **endorsed**⁷⁵ certificate programmes that **bypass**⁷⁶ universities entirely, offering a faster, cheaper route to employability in **high-demand fields**⁷⁷.

The Persistence of Credentials

Yet the degree has not vanished, nor is it likely to. In professions where knowledge is deep, cumulative and heavily regulated – medicine, law, engineering, architecture – formal qualifications remain **indispensable**⁷⁸. No amount of online coursework will **substitute for**⁷⁹ the **supervised clinical practice**⁸⁰ of a medical degree or the rigorous **problem-solving training**⁸¹ of an accredited engineering programme. Even in technology, where the **skills-first movement**⁸² began, many senior roles still favour candidates with **postgraduate qualifications**⁸³ in

computer science or mathematics, particularly when the work involves **algorithm design**⁸⁴ or **machine learning research**⁸⁵.

Moreover, degrees **confer**⁸⁶ benefits beyond technical knowledge. They signal an ability to **navigate**⁸⁷ complex institutions, manage long-term projects and **engage with**⁸⁸ **abstract ideas**⁸⁹. University also serves as a **sorting ground**⁹⁰ for **social capital**⁹¹, exposing students to diverse peers,

⁷⁵ to endorse sth *tɒ ɪnˈdɔːs ˈsʌmθɪŋ* poprzeć coś, rekomendować coś

⁷⁶ to bypass sth *tə ˈbaɪpɑːs ˈsʌmθɪŋ* ominąć coś

⁷⁷ high-demand field *haɪ dɪˈmɑːnd fiːld* dziedzina o dużym zapotrzebowaniu

⁷⁸ indispensable *ˌɪndɪˈspensəbəl* niezbędny

⁷⁹ to substitute for sth *tə ˈsʌbstɪtjuːt fɔː ˈsʌmθɪŋ* zastąpić coś

⁸⁰ supervised clinical practice *ˈsuːpəvaɪzd ˈklynɪkəl ˈpræktɪs* nadzorowana praktyka kliniczna

⁸¹ problem-solving training *ˈprɒbləm ˌsɒlvɪŋ ˈtreɪnɪŋ* szkolenie z rozwiązywania problemów

⁸² skills-first movement *skɪlz fɜːst ˈmuːvmənt* ruch na rzecz rekrutacji opartej na umiejętnościach

⁸³ postgraduate qualification *ˌpɒstˈɡrædʒuət ˌkwɒlɪfɪˈkeɪʃən* kwalifikacje podyplomowe

⁸⁴ algorithm design *ˈælgərɪðəm dɪˈzajɪn* projektowanie algorytmów

⁸⁵ machine learning research *məˈʃiːn ˈlɜːnɪŋ rɪˈsɜːtʃ* badania nad uczeniem maszynowym

⁸⁶ to confer sth *tə kənˈfɜː ˈsʌmθɪŋ* nadawać coś, zapewniać coś

⁸⁷ to navigate sth *tə ˈnævɪɡeɪt ˈsʌmθɪŋ* tu: poruszać się po czymś

⁸⁸ to engage with sth *tə ɪnˈɡeɪdʒ wɪð ˈsʌmθɪŋ* zajmować się czymś, angażować się w coś

⁸⁹ abstract idea *ˈæbstrækt aɪˈdɪə* abstrakcyjna idea

⁹⁰ sorting ground *ˈsɔːtɪŋ ɡraʊnd* tu: miejsce selekcji

⁹¹ social capital *ˈsəʊʃəl ˈkæpɪtəl* kapitał społeczny



mentors and networks that **shape**⁹² careers long after graduation. Employers may no longer require a degree, but they still value what a degree often represents: **intellectual curiosity**⁹³, resilience and the capacity for **sustained effort**⁹⁴.

IBM reported in 2024 that half its US **job openings**⁹⁵ no longer **stipulate**⁹⁶ a **four-year degree**⁹⁷, yet the company simultaneously expanded partnerships with universities to design curricula aligned with **emerging technologies**⁹⁸. The message is clear: the credential is being **unbundled**⁹⁹, not discarded. What matters is that the learning is relevant, demonstrable and **up to date**¹⁰⁰. A candidate with a computer science degree from 2010 may be less prepared for **cloud infrastructure**¹⁰¹ work than someone with a recent **AWS certification**¹⁰² and a portfolio of **deployments**¹⁰³. The question is not degree versus no degree, but which credential best predicts performance.

The Road Ahead

The next phase of this transition will test whether organisations can close the gap between aspiration and **implementation**¹⁰⁴. Companies that removed degree requirements in 2024 are expected to spend 2026 and 2027 **refining**¹⁰⁵ their **assessment tools**¹⁰⁶, training recruiters and building systems to evaluate **non-traditional credentials**¹⁰⁷ at scale. This will require investment in software platforms that **parse**¹⁰⁸ digital badges, conduct **automated skills testing**¹⁰⁹ and rank candidates based on **competency matrices**¹¹⁰ rather than **educational pedigree**¹¹¹. It will also demand **cultural change**¹¹², persuading hiring managers to trust data over **instinct**¹¹³ and out-comes over **proxies**¹¹⁴.

The stakes are high. Skills-based hiring, if **executed**¹¹⁵ well, can **expand the talent pool**¹¹⁶, **reduce bias**¹¹⁷ and improve job performance. It opens **pathways**¹¹⁸ for individuals who could not afford university, who left education early or who **pivot careers**¹¹⁹ mid-life. In 2024, around 45 percent of organisations stopped requiring a bachelor's degree for some positions,

down from the 55 percent that had done so in 2023. If this cohort succeeds in hiring effectively without degrees, others will follow. If they revert to credential screening because competency assessment proves too cumbersome, the movement will stall.

⁹² to shape sth *tɔ ʃeɪp 'sʌmθɪŋ* kształtować coś

⁹³ intellectual curiosity *ˌɪntəˈlektʃʊəl ˌkjʊəriˈɒsəti* ciekawość intelektualna

⁹⁴ sustained effort *səˈsteɪnd 'efət* ciągły wysiłek

⁹⁵ job opening *dʒɒb 'əʊpənɪŋ* wolne stanowisko

⁹⁶ to stipulate sth *tɔ 'stɪpjʊleɪt 'sʌmθɪŋ* wymagać czegoś, zastrzegać coś

⁹⁷ four-year degree *fɔː jɪə dɪ'ɡriː* czteroletnie studia licencjackie

⁹⁸ emerging technology *ɪˈmɜːdʒɪŋ tekˈnɒlədʒi* technologia wschodząca

⁹⁹ to be unbundled *tɔ bi ʌnˈbʌndəld* **tu:** być rozbijanym na elementy

¹⁰⁰ up to date *ˌʌp tə 'deɪt* aktualny, świeży

¹⁰¹ cloud infrastructure *klaʊd ˌɪnfəˈstrʌktʃə* infrastruktura chmurowa

¹⁰² AWS certification *ɛɪ ˈdʌbljuː es ˌsɜːtɪfɪˈkeɪʃən* certyfikat Amazon Web Services

¹⁰³ deployment *dɪˈplɔɪmənt* **tu:** wdrożenie

¹⁰⁴ implementation *ˌɪmplɪmenˈteɪʃən* wdrażanie, realizacja

¹⁰⁵ to refine sth *tɔ rɪˈfaɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ* udoskonalać, precyzować coś

¹⁰⁶ assessment tool *əˈsesmənt tuːl* narzędzie oceny

¹⁰⁷ non-traditional credential *nɒn trəˈdɪʃənəl krɪˈdɛnʃəl* niekonwencjonalne kwalifikacje

¹⁰⁸ to parse sth *tɔ paːz 'sʌmθɪŋ* **tu:** analizować, przetwarzać coś

¹⁰⁹ automated skills testing *ˈɔːtəmeɪtɪd skɪlz ˈtestɪŋ* automatyczne testowanie umiejętności

¹¹⁰ competency matrix *ˈkɒmpɪtənsi ˈmeɪtrɪks* matryca kompetencji

¹¹¹ educational pedigree *ˌedʒəˈkeɪʃənəl ˈpedɪɡriː* wykształcenie, dorobek edukacyjny, renowa wynikająca z wykształcenia

¹¹² cultural change *ˈkʌltʃərəl tʃeɪndʒ* zmiana kulturowa

¹¹³ instinct *ˈɪnstɪŋkt* **tu:** intuicja

¹¹⁴ proxy *ˈprɒksi* **tu:** zastępczy wskaźnik

¹¹⁵ to execute sth *tɔ ˈeksɪkjʊt 'sʌmθɪŋ* przeprowadzić, zrealizować coś

¹¹⁶ to expand the talent pool *tɔ ɪkˈspænd ðə ˈtælənt puːl* poszerzyć pulę talentów

¹¹⁷ to reduce bias *tɔ rɪˈdjuːs ˈbaɪəs* zmniejszyć uprzedzenia

¹¹⁸ pathway *ˈpaːθweɪ* ścieżka, droga

¹¹⁹ to pivot careers *tɔ ˈpɪvət kəˈrɪəz* zmienić ścieżkę kariery

WHERE DEGREES STILL DOMINATE

- Medicine and healthcare: **clinical training**¹ and **patient safety**² demand accredited qualifications and supervised practice
- Law: **bar admission**³ and professional regulation require formal **legal education**⁴ in nearly all jurisdictions
- Engineering and architecture: **chartered status**⁵ and **project liability**⁶ hinge on⁷ recognised degree programmes⁸
- Academia and advanced research: postgraduate qualifications remain prerequisites for teaching and **scholarly work**⁹

¹ clinical training *ˈklɪnɪkəl ˈtreɪnɪŋ*

szkolenie kliniczne

² patient safety *ˈpeɪʃənt ˈseɪfti*

bezpieczeństwo pacjenta

³ bar admission *bɑː ədˈmɪʃən* wpis na listę adwokatów

⁴ legal education *ˈliːɡəl ˌedʒəˈkeɪʃən* edukacja prawnicza

⁵ chartered status *ˈtʃɑːtəd ˈsteɪtəs* status dyplomowanego specjalisty

⁶ project liability *ˈprɒdʒekt ˌlɪəˈbɪləti* odpowiedzialność za projekt

⁷ to hinge on sth *tɔ ˈhɪndʒ ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ* zależeć od czegoś

⁸ recognised degree programme *ˈrekəɡnaɪzd dɪˈɡriː ˈprəʊɡræm* uznany program studiów

⁹ scholarly work *ˈskɒləli wɜːk* praca naukowa

INFOBOX



The likeliest outcome is a **hybrid model**¹²⁰. Degrees will **retain value**¹²¹ in fields where **foundational knowledge**¹²² is essential and where **professional accreditation**¹²³ demands formal study. Elsewhere, employers will rely on a **mosaic of signals**¹²⁴: certifications, portfolios, **test scores**¹²⁵, **referrals**¹²⁶ and prior projects. The labour market will grow more meritocratic in some respects, more fragmented in others. What remains certain is that the **credential landscape**¹²⁷ is shifting. Employers are asking not where you studied, but what you can do. The challenge now is proving they mean it.

¹²⁰ **hybrid model** 'haɪbrɪd 'mɒdəl model
hybrydowy

¹²¹ **to retain value** tə ri'teɪn 'vælju: zachowywać
wartość

¹²² **foundational knowledge** faʊn'deɪʃənəl 'nɒlɪdʒ
wiedza podstawowa, fundamentalna

¹²³ **professional accreditation** prə'feʃənəl
ə,kredɪ'teɪʃən akredytacja zawodowa

¹²⁴ **mosaic of signals** məʊ'zeɪk əv 'sɪgnəlz
mozaika sygnałów, złożony obraz
wskaźników

¹²⁵ **test score** test skɔ: wynik testu

¹²⁶ **referral** rɪ'fɜ:rəl tu: rekomendacja, polecenie

¹²⁷ **credential landscape** krɪ'denʃəl 'lændskeɪp
krajobraz kwalifikacji



You will never guess how this thrilling story ends!

The Moon Effect is a gripping novel that blends romance, music, and globe-spanning adventure with a touch of mystery and fate's unpredictable twists. This action-packed tale introduces vampires unlike any you've encountered before entwined with humans who possess extraordinary mental abilities.

Step aboard a streetcar named adventure and meet an unforgettable cast of characters:

- Desiree Burns – a prodigy novelist destined for more than literary fame.
- Percy Prince – charming, confident, and dangerously easy to fall for.
- Drakhe – a ruthless vampire devoid of mercy... or perhaps even a soul.
- Cornelius Andersen – a German singer with a voice so powerful it could tempt the devil himself.
- Ariel – the one whose existence must remain a secret at all costs.

· Hagen – a vampire who means well, yet somehow makes everything worse.

As passions ignite and loyalties are tested, the stakes rise higher than ever – threatening not only broken hearts but the very future of humankind.

Don't hesitate.
Surrender to the pull of The Moon Effect...
and let yourself be swept away.



KUP TERAZ

Colorful

Sorry, Could You Run That Past Me Again?¹

Here's a **liberating**² truth: the most competent people in the meeting are often those who admit when they haven't understood something. The phrase 'I didn't quite **catch that**³' is not an apology – it's a **power move**⁴.

When the Line Crackles (or Your Brain Does)

Technical **gremlins**⁵ and **attention lapses**⁶ strike everyone. The **rookie mistake**⁷ is pretending you heard while mentally **re-winding**⁸ the conversation in panic. Instead, interrupt gracefully: 'Sorry, I didn't quite catch that – could you repeat the last bit?' works universally. For video calls with **dodgy**⁹ connections, try 'You're **breaking up**¹⁰ slightly – would you mind saying that again?' It's factual, not **accusatory**¹¹.

If the problem persists, acknowledge it openly: 'I'm having trouble hearing you clearly – shall we switch to the chat function for this point?' This shows you're **solutions-focused**¹² rather than simply **nodding along**¹³ to **garbled**¹⁴ audio while understanding nothing. The cost of pretending is almost always higher than the two seconds it takes to ask.

When You Heard It But Have No Idea What It Means

This is **trickier territory**¹⁵. You caught every word, yet the sentence remains **magnificently**¹⁶ **opaque**¹⁷. Perhaps it's **jargon**¹⁸

('We need to **leverage**¹⁹ our **synergies**²⁰ around the **KPI**²¹ **dashboard**²²'), perhaps it's an acronym you've never encountered, or perhaps your colleague has simply expressed themselves poorly. Either way, clarity matters more than **saving face**²³.

'Could you clarify what you mean by [term]?' is your **workhorse**²⁴ phrase here. For jargon overload, try: 'Just so I'm **on the same page**²⁵ – when you say we're **sunsetting the platform**²⁶, do you mean closing it down entirely?' For acronyms: 'Sorry, what does **CSAT**²⁷ stand for in this context?' The phrase 'in this context' is gold – it suggests you know the term might mean something elsewhere, softening any **implication**²⁸ of ignorance.

Avoid the textbook-English trap of saying 'What is the meaning of...?' or 'I do not understand this word.' Native speakers say: 'What exactly do you mean by...?' or 'I'm not familiar with that term – could you explain it briefly?'

When They're Speaking at Auction-House Velocity²⁹

Some colleagues speak as though they're being charged by the minute. Asking them to slow down requires

¹ Sorry, could you run that past me again? 'sɒri kʊd jʊ rʌn ðæt pɑːst miː əˈɡen tuː **Przepraszam, czy możesz to powtórzyć?**

² liberating 'lɪbəreɪtɪŋ **wyzwalający**

³ to catch sth tə kætʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ tuː **zrozumieć, dosłyszeć coś**

⁴ power move 'paʊə muːv **strategiczne posunięcie budujące pozycję, mocny ruch**

⁵ gremlin 'ɡremɪn tuː **chochlik, drobna usterka techniczna**

⁶ attention lapse ə'tenʃn læps **chwilowa utrata koncentracji, dekoncentracja**

⁷ rookie mistake 'rʊki mɪ'steɪk **błąd początkującego**

⁸ to rewind tə riː'waɪnd **przewijać (film, nagranie)**

⁹ dodgy 'dɒdʒi **kiepski, zawodny, słabej jakości**

¹⁰ to break up tə breɪk ʌp tuː **urywać się, przerywać (o połączeniu)**

¹¹ accusatory ə'kjuːzətəri **oskarżycielski**

¹² solutions-focused sə'lʊːʃnz 'fəʊkəst **nastawiony na rozwiązanie, skoncentrowany na szukaniu rozwiązań**

¹³ to nod along tə nɒd ə'lɒŋ **przytakiwać, kiwać głową na zgodę**

¹⁴ garbled 'ɡɑːblɪd **zniekształcony, nieczytelny, niewyraźny (dźwięk)**

¹⁵ trickier territory 'trɪkiə 'terətəri **bardziej skomplikowana sytuacja**

¹⁶ magnificently mæɡ'nɪfɪsəntli tuː **wspaniale**

¹⁷ opaque əp'əɪk tuː **niezrozumiały, nieprzejrzysty**

¹⁸ jargon 'dʒɑːɡən **żargon, język specjalistyczny**

¹⁹ to leverage tə 'levərɪdʒ tuː **wykorzystać, wprowadzić w ruch (zasoby)**

²⁰ synergy 'sɪnədʒi **synergia, efekt współpracy**

²¹ KPI (Key Performance Indicator) keɪ piː ɑː kiː pə'fɔːməns 'ɪndɪkətə **kluczowy wskaźnik efektywności**

²² dashboard 'dæʃbɔːd tuː **panel kontrolny, kokpit (w systemie informatycznym)**

²³ to save face tə seɪv feɪs **zachować twarz, uniknąć kompromitacji**

²⁴ workhorse 'wɜːkɔːs tuː **podstawowe, sprawdzone narzędzie**

²⁵ to be on the same page tə bi ɒn ðə seɪm peɪdʒ **być zgodnym w rozumieniu, zgadzać się co do interpretacji**

²⁶ to sunset sth tə 'sʌnset 'sʌmθɪŋ **wycofać coś, zakończyć działanie (produktu, usługi)**

²⁷ CSAT (Customer Satisfaction) siː es ɪ tiː 'kʌstəmə 'sætɪs'fækʃən **wskaźnik satysfakcji klienta**

²⁸ implication ˌɪmplɪ'keɪʃən tuː **sugestia**

²⁹ auction-house velocity 'ɔːkʃn haʊs vɛ'lɒsəti **szybkość wypowiedzi jak w domu aukcyjnym, bardzo szybkie tempo mówienia**

A WORD WORTH REMEMBERING

garbled
/'gɑːblɪd/
zniekształcony,
niewyraźny (o dźwię-
ku lub komunikacie)

diplomacy. 'Would you mind slowing down just a touch³⁰? I want to make sure I capture³¹ all the details' works beautifully – you've made it about your thoroughness³², not their pace.

Here's a micro-dialogue from a project call: 'So we're rolling out³³ phase one across EMEA³⁴ while simultaneously piloting the beta³⁵ in APAC³⁶ and if stakeholder³⁷ feedback is positive by Q3³⁸ we'll accelerate the timeline for...' / 'Sorry to interrupt – there's a lot there and I want to get it right. Could we break that down³⁹? You mentioned rolling out phase one across EMEA first?' Notice how the interruption⁴⁰ is framed⁴¹ as a quality-control measure⁴², not a comprehension problem.

³⁰ just a touch dʒʌst ə tʌtʃ odrobinę, trochę

³¹ to capture sth tə 'kæptʃə sʌmθɪŋ uchwycić coś

³² thoroughness 'θʌrənəs dokładność, gruntowność

³³ to roll out tə rɒl aʊt wdrażać, wprowadzać (produkt, system)

³⁴ EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) i: em i: ei 'jʊərəp, 'mɪdəl 'iːst ənd 'æfrɪkə Europa, Bliski Wschód i Afryka

³⁵ to pilot sth tə 'paɪlət 'sʌmθɪŋ prowadzić pilotażowe wdrożenie czegoś, testować

³⁶ APAC (Asia-Pacific) ei pi: ei si: 'eɪzə pə'sɪfɪk region Azji i Pacyfiku

³⁷ stakeholder 'steɪkəhəʊldə interesariusz

³⁸ Q3 kju: θri: trzeci kwartał roku

³⁹ to break sth down tə breɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ daʊn rozłożyć coś na czynniki, omówić punkt po punkcie

⁴⁰ interruption ,ɪntə'rʌpʃən przerwanie

⁴¹ to frame sth tə freɪm 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: przedstawić coś, ująć w ramy

The Safety Net⁴³: Confirming What You Think You Heard

'Just to make sure I've understood correctly...' is possibly the most useful phrase in business English. It works whether you're 90 percent certain or 40 percent certain. Follow it with your understanding: '...you need the revised figures by Thursday, not Friday?' or '...we're postponing the Leeds meeting but keeping the Manchester one?'

Another elegant variant⁴⁴: 'So if I've got this right, we're saying that...' or 'Let me play that back⁴⁵ to you – we'll...' This technique is especially valuable at the

⁴² quality-control measure 'kwɒləti kən'trɒl 'meʒə działanie zapewniające kontrolę jakości

⁴³ safety net 'seɪfti net tu: siatka bezpieczeństwa, zabezpieczenie

⁴⁴ variant 'veəriənt wariant, odmiana (wyrażenia)

⁴⁵ to play sth back tə pleɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ bæk tu: powtórzyć, odtworzyć (np. informację)



SOFTENING THE BLOW

Complete the polite business questions using the direct questions as a guide.

1. "What do you mean by KPI dashboard?"
Could you clarify what _____ by KPI dashboard?
2. "Why are we changing the deadline?"
Would you mind explaining why _____ the deadline?
3. "Did you say Thursday or Friday?"
Just to make sure I've understood correctly, _____ Thursday or Friday?
4. "What does CSAT stand for?"
Could you tell me what CSAT _____ in this context?
5. "Can we slow down?"
Would you mind _____ down just a touch?
6. "Are we closing the platform down?"
When you say we're sunseting the platform, do you mean _____ it down entirely?

BEM TEST

Answers: 1. you mean, 2. we are changing/we're closing, 3. did you say/you said, 4. stands for, 5. slowing, 6. we are changing/we're closing.

end of meetings when confirming **action points**⁴⁶. It prevents the **ghastly**⁴⁷ scenario where everyone leaves with different **interpretations**⁴⁸ of who's doing what by when.

A final **snippet**⁴⁹, from a video negotiation: 'Before we move on, can I just check I've understood the revised terms? We're committing to⁵⁰ 500 units monthly with a 60-day **payment window**⁵¹?' / 'Exactly right.' / 'Brilliant, thanks for clarifying.' Five seconds that might save five weeks of **confusion**⁵². That's rather good value, wouldn't you say?

⁴⁶ **action point** 'ækʃn pɔɪnt punkt do realizacji, zadanie do wykonania po spotkaniu

⁴⁷ **ghastly** 'gɑːstli straszny, okropny

⁴⁸ **interpretation** ɪnˌtɜːpriːteɪʃn interpretacja, rozumienie

⁴⁹ **snippet** 'snɪpɪt fragment, urywek (rozmowy)

⁵⁰ **to commit to sth** tə kə'mɪt tə 'sʌmθɪŋ zobowiązać się do czegoś

⁵¹ **payment window** 'peɪmənt 'wɪndəʊ termin płatności, okno płatnicze

⁵² **confusion** kən'fjuːʒən tu: nieporozumienie

5 Phrases Worth Remembering

- I didn't quite catch that.¹
- Could you clarify what you mean by...?
- Could we break that down?²
- Just to make sure I've understood correctly...
- So, if I've got this right...

¹ I didn't quite catch that. aɪ dɪdnt kwaɪt kætʃ ðæt Nie całkiem zrozumiałem/am./Nie dosłyszałem/am.

² Could we break that down? kʊd wiː breɪk ðæt daʊn Czy moglibyśmy omówić to krok po kroku?/Czy możemy to przeanalizować?

INFOBOX

Business Dialogues:

Four Days Back

Gemma Chen, a senior software architect at a London fintech, has been summoned by her line manager, Stuart Holloway, to discuss the firm's new **return-to-office mandate**¹ requiring four days **on-site**². After two years of remote work with stellar performance reviews, Gemma's prepared to **push back**³ – hard.

been **exemplary**¹⁶. But this isn't about **individual contributors**¹⁷ – it's a **strategic shift**¹⁸ across the entire organisation. **Gemma:** (*coolly*) Then let's talk strategy. I've spent two years optimising

¹ **return-to-office mandate** rɪˈtɜːn tə 'ɒfɪs

'mændet nakaz powrotu do pracy w biurze

² **on-site** ɒn saɪt w siedzibie firmy, na miejscu

³ **to push back** tə pʊʃ bæk stawić opór, sprzeciwić się

⁴ **C-suite** siː swɪt najwyższe kierownictwo firmy, zarząd

⁵ **rationale** ˌræʃəˈnɑːl uzasadnienie, logika

⁶ **paper-thin** 'peɪpə θɪn tu: niewiarygodny, słaby, nietrzymający się kupy

⁷ **intangible** ɪnˈtændʒəbl niematerialny, nieuchwytny

⁸ **osmosis** ɒzˈmɒsɪs tu: naturalne przyswajanie wiedzy przez przebywanie w czyimś towarzystwie

⁹ **pair programming** peə 'prəʊɡræmɪŋ programowanie parami (dwie osoby przy jednym kodzie)

¹⁰ **asynchronous** eɪˈsɪŋkrənəs asynchroniczny, w różnym czasie

¹¹ **code review** kəʊd rɪˈvjuː przegląd kodu (sprawdzanie kodu przez innych programistów)

¹² **water-cooler chat** 'wɔːtə kuːlə tʃæt pogawędka przy dystrybutorze wody, nieformalna rozmowa w pracy

¹³ **knowledge transfer** 'nɒlɪdʒ trænsˈfɜː transfer wiedzy, przekazywanie wiedzy

¹⁴ **to dispute** tə dɪˈspjuːt kwestionować, spierać się

¹⁵ **output** ˈaʊtpʊt tu: wydajność, wyniki pracy

¹⁶ **exemplary** ɪɡˈzempləri wzorowy, przykładowy

¹⁷ **individual contributor** ˌɪndɪˈvɪdʒuəl kənˈtrɪbjʊtə samodzielny specjalista (bez funkcji kierowniczych)

¹⁸ **strategic shift** strəˈtɪːdʒɪk ʃɪft zmiana strategii, zwrot strategiczny

ACT 1: The Mandate

Stuart's office, 10th floor – Tuesday morning

Stuart (Engineering Manager): (*gesturing towards a chair*) Gemma, thanks for coming up. I know you've seen the email from the **C-suite**⁴ about the new workplace policy. Four days in-office from the first of next month.

Gemma: (*sitting down, tablet in hand*) I have. And I'd like to discuss it, frankly. The timing feels arbitrary, and the **rationale**⁵ in that email was **paper-thin**⁶. 'Fostering collaboration' – we've collaborated brilliantly for two years remotely.

Stuart: (*leaning back*) I hear you. But it's come from the top. The board feels we've lost something **intangible**⁷ – spontaneity, mentorship, that sort of thing. They're not wrong that junior developers struggle without **osmosis**⁸.

Gemma: Osmosis? Stuart, we've implemented **pair programming**⁹ sessions, virtual office hours, **asynchronous**¹⁰ **code reviews**¹¹ – all documented, all measurable. What we've lost in **water-cooler chat**¹², we've more than made up for in structured **knowledge transfer**¹³.

Stuart: (*shifting uncomfortably*) I'm not **disputing**¹⁴ your team's **output**¹⁵. You know your performance reviews have

my life around remote work. I moved to Kent. I'm caring for my father three evenings a week. Four days back means eighteen hours a week commuting – that's half a working week gone.

Stuart: I appreciate that it's disruptive. But the policy applies **across the board**¹⁹. I can't **carve out**²⁰ exceptions without **opening the floodgates**²¹.

ACT 2: The Counteroffer

Same office – fifteen minutes later

Gemma: (*leaning forward*) Then let's not call it an exception. Let's call it a **pilot**²². I propose a hybrid arrangement: two days on-site, **weighted towards**²³ team meetings and workshops. I'll be fully available for critical face-to-face sessions. In return, I maintain the **deep-focus time**²⁴ that's made me effective.

Stuart: (*frowning*) Gemma, I can't **pitch that**²⁵ **upstairs**²⁶. The entire **premise**²⁷ of the mandate is that we've been too **lenient**²⁸. If I walk into the leadership meeting asking for a two-day deal for one of my senior people, I'll be **laughed out of the room**²⁹.

Gemma: Will you? Because I've drafted the **business case**³⁰. My team's **sprint velocity**³¹ is up thirty-two percent **year-on-year**³². Our **defect rate**³³ is the lowest in engineering. I've mentored four juniors to mid-level – all remotely. Those are hardly the **hallmarks**³⁴ of someone who's **checked out**³⁵.

Stuart: (*picking up his phone, then setting it down*) You're putting me in an impossible position. If I **advocate for you**³⁶, I **undermine**³⁷ the policy before it's even launched. And if the policy fails because of too many carve-outs, we're **back to square one**³⁸.

Gemma: (*quietly*) Stuart, I'm not **bluffing**³⁹ here. This isn't a **negotiating tactic**⁴⁰. If the mandate stands **as written**⁴¹, I'll need to consider my options. I've had two LinkedIn approaches in the past **fortnight**⁴² from fully remote firms. I've ignored them – until now.

Stuart: (*visibly stiffening*⁴³) Are you saying you'd leave over this?

Gemma: I'm saying that my circumstances have changed, and the flexibility I've built my life around isn't a **perk**⁴⁴ – it's a necessity. If the firm can't accommodate that, then yes, I'll explore alternatives. I'd rather not. I like it here. But I won't sacrifice my family for a mandate that **serves no measurable purpose**⁴⁵.

Stuart: (*rubbing his temples*⁴⁶) Right. Let me be clear: I don't want to lose you. You're one of the best architects we have. But I need you to understand that if I **go to bat for you**⁴⁷ on this, I'm spending **political capital**⁴⁸ I may not have.

Gemma: Then spend it wisely. **Frame it**⁴⁹ as a **retention issue**⁵⁰, not a policy exception. You're not **setting a precedent**⁵¹ – you're responding to the market. Competitors are offering full flexibility. If we're going to **impose**⁵² mandates, we need to be prepared to lose talent.

ACT 3: The Compromise

Same office – late afternoon, same day

Stuart: (*returning from a meeting, loosening his tie*⁵³) Right. I've just come from an hour with the **Chief People Officer**⁵⁴ and the Engineering Director. It was... **tense**⁵⁵. But I've secured something. Not everything you wanted, but more than I thought possible.

¹⁹ **across the board** 'ə'krɒs ðə bɔ:d bez
wyjątku, dla wszystkich

²⁰ **to carve out** tə kɑ:v aʊt tu: wyłączyć,
stworzyć wyjątek

²¹ **to open the floodgates** tə 'əʊpən ðə
'flʌdɡɜ:tɪz otworzyć śluzy, spowodować
lawinę podobnych przypadków

²² **pilot** 'paɪlət tu: program pilotażowy, próba

²³ **weighted towards** 'weɪtɪd tə'wɔ:dz
skoncentrowany na, z naciskiem na

²⁴ **deep-focus time** di:p 'fəʊkəs taɪm czas na
głęboką koncentrację, praca wymagająca
skupienia

²⁵ **to pitch sth** tə ptʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: przedstawić,
zapropozować coś

²⁶ **upstairs** ʌp'steəz tu: wyższym szczeblom,
kierownictwu

²⁷ **premise** 'premɪs założenie, przesłanka

²⁸ **lenient** 'li:nɪənt pobłażliwy, łagodny

²⁹ **to be laughed out of the room** tə bi lɑ:ft aʊt
ɒv ðə ru:m zostać wyśmianym, spotkać się
z kpiną

³⁰ **business case** 'bɪznɪs keɪs uzasadnienie
biznesowe, analiza opłacalności

³¹ **sprint velocity** sprɪnt və'losəti prędkość
sprintów (w metodyce zwinnej)

³² **year-on-year** jɪər ɒn 'jɪər rok do roku,
w ujęciu rocznym

³³ **defect rate** 'di:fekt reɪt wskaźnik błędów,
liczba defektów

³⁴ **hallmark** 'hɔ:lma:k cecha
charakterystyczna, wyróżnik

³⁵ **to check out** tə tʃek aʊt tu: wyłączyć się,
przestać się angażować

³⁶ **to advocate for sb** tə 'ædvəkeɪt fɔ: 'sʌmbədi
opowiadać się za kimś, występować
w czyimś imieniu

³⁷ **to undermine** tə ʌndə'maɪn podważać,
osłabiać

³⁸ **to be back to square one** tə bi bæk tə skweə
wʌn wrócić do punktu wyjścia

³⁹ **to bluff** tə blʌf blefować

⁴⁰ **negotiating tactic** nɪ'ɡəʊʃiəteɪŋ 'tæktɪk
tatyka negocjacyjna

⁴¹ **as written** æz 'rɪtɪn w obecnym brzmieniu,
tak jak jest napisane

⁴² **fortnight** 'fɔ:tnaɪt dwa tygodnie

⁴³ **to stiffen** tə 'stɪfn tu: sztywnieć

⁴⁴ **perk** pɜ:k dodatek, przywilej

⁴⁵ **to serve a purpose** tə sɜ:v ə 'pɜ:pəs służyć
jakemuś celowi

⁴⁶ **to rub one's temples** tə rʌb wʌnz 'templz
pocierać skronie (ze zmęczenia lub
zdeenerowania)

⁴⁷ **to go to bat for sb** tə ɡəʊ tə bæɪt fɔ: 'sʌmbədi
stawać w czyjejś obronie, walczyć
o kogoś

⁴⁸ **political capital** pə'ltɪkl 'kæpɪtl kapitał
polityczny, wpływy

⁴⁹ **to frame sth** tə freɪm 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:
przedstawić, ująć coś

⁵⁰ **retention issue** rɪ'tenʃən 'ɪʃu: problem
z utrzymaniem pracowników

⁵¹ **to set a precedent** tə set ə 'presɪdənt
tworzyć precedens

⁵² **to impose sth** tə ɪm'pəʊz'sʌmθɪŋ narzucać,
wprowadzać coś

⁵³ **to loosen one's tie** tə 'lu:sn wʌnz taɪ
poluzować krawat

⁵⁴ **Chief People Officer** tʃi:f 'pi:pl 'ɒfɪsə dyrektor
ds. personalnych

⁵⁵ **tense** tens napięty

Gemma: (*sitting up*) Go on.

Stuart: Three days on-site, not four. Tuesday through Thursday, **core collaboration days**⁵⁶. Mondays and Fridays remote, provided you're available for any **critical incidents**⁵⁷. It's **conditional on**⁵⁸ maintaining your current **performance metrics**⁵⁹, and it's a six-month trial. After that, we **reassess**⁶⁰.

Gemma: (*pausing*) Three days is **workable**⁶¹. It's not ideal, but it's **manageable**⁶². What about the **trial period**⁶³? If my metrics stay strong, does the arrangement become permanent?

Stuart: That's the **sticking point**⁶⁴. They wouldn't **commit to**⁶⁵ **permanence**⁶⁶ – too much **flux**⁶⁷ in the broader policy environment. But they did agree that if the trial succeeds, it'll form the basis for a wider conversation about senior-level flexibility.

Gemma: (*nodding slowly*) So I'm the **test case**⁶⁸.

Stuart: Essentially, yes. If this works, it opens the door for others. If it doesn't – or if it's perceived not to – then the door **slams shut**⁶⁹. No pressure.

Gemma: (*with a faint smile*) No pressure at all. Fine. I'll take it. But let's **document this**⁷⁰ properly. I want the terms in writing, including the performance **benchmarks**⁷¹ and the **review timeline**⁷². I'm not running this **on a handshake**⁷³.

Stuart: (*extending his hand*) Agreed. I'll have HR draw up an **addendum**⁷⁴ to your contract by Friday. And Gemma – thank you. For pushing back, I mean. It's made the organisation think harder about what it's asking for.

Gemma: (*shaking his hand*) Let's hope it's thought hard enough. Because if this **falls apart**⁷⁵, we'll both be updating our CVs.

⁵⁶ **core collaboration days** kɔ: kə,læbə'reɪʃən deɪz główne dni pracy zespołowej

⁵⁷ **critical incident** 'krɪtɪkl 'ɪnsɪdənt poważna awaria

⁵⁸ **conditional on sth** kən'dɪʃənl on 'sʌmθɪŋ uzależniony od czegoś, uwarunkowany czymś

⁵⁹ **performance metrics** pə'fɔ:məns 'metrɪks wskaźniki wydajności

⁶⁰ **to reassess** ,ri:ə'ses ponownie ocenić, przeanalizować na nowo

⁶¹ **workable** 'wɜ:kəbl **tu:** możliwy do zrealizowania, do zaakceptowania

⁶² **manageable** 'mænɪdʒəbl **do** opanowania, możliwy do zrealizowania

⁶³ **trial period** 'traɪəl 'piəriəd okres próbny

⁶⁴ **sticking point** 'stɪkɪŋ pɔɪnt kość niezgody, punkt sporny

⁶⁵ **to commit to sth** tə kə'mɪt tə 'sʌmθɪŋ zobowiązać się do czegoś

⁶⁶ **permanence** 'pɜ:mənəns stałość, trwałość

⁶⁷ **flux** flaks **tu:** płynność, ciągłe zmiany

⁶⁸ **test case** test keɪs przypadek testowy, przykład do sprawdzenia

⁶⁹ **to slam shut** tə slæm ʃʌt zatrzasnąć się

⁷⁰ **to document sth** tə 'dɒkjumənt 'sʌmθɪŋ udokumentować, spisać coś

⁷¹ **benchmark** 'bentʃmɑ:k punkt odniesienia, wskaźnik

⁷² **review timeline** ri'vju: 'taɪmlaɪn harmonogram przeglądu

⁷³ **on a handshake** ɒn ə 'hændʃeɪk na słowo honoru, dosł. na uścisk dłoni

⁷⁴ **addendum** ə'dendəm aneks, dodatek do umowy

⁷⁵ **to fall apart** tə fɔ:l ə'pɑ:t **tu:** rozpaść się, nie wypalić

1. Workplace Flexibility & Policy

Language for discussing remote work arrangements and organisational mandates.

- **return-to-office mandate** – a formal requirement from an employer that employees work from company premises for a specified number of days. The return-to-office mandate has sparked fierce debate among staff who relocated during the pandemic.
- **hybrid arrangement** – a working pattern that combines on-site and remote work over a given period. She proposed a hybrid arrangement that would allow her to maintain family commitments whilst meeting team needs.
- **carve out an exception** – to create a special allowance or

exemption from a general rule or policy. Management feared that carving out exceptions for senior staff would undermine the entire policy framework.

- **open the floodgates** – to trigger a large number of similar requests or actions that become difficult to control. Approving one remote-work exception could open the floodgates to hundreds of similar applications.
- **across the board** – applying equally to all people, groups or categories without exception. The new attendance policy was implemented across the board, affecting everyone from interns to executives.
- **deep-focus time** – uninterrupted periods dedicated to cognitively demanding work requiring concentration. Remote working gives me the deep-focus time I need for complex architectural design work.
- **test case** – a situation or example used to establish a principle or standard that may be applied more widely. Her flexible arrangement became a test case for whether senior engineers could maintain productivity remotely.

2. Negotiation & Persuasion

Expressions for making arguments and negotiating workplace terms.

- **push back** – to resist, challenge, or express disagreement with a decision or proposal. Several department heads pushed back against the return-to-office timeline, citing recruitment concerns.
- **paper-thin** – extremely weak, unconvincing, or lacking

substance (used of arguments or justifications). The rationale provided for the policy change was paper-thin and failed to address employee concerns.

- **business case** – a documented argument supporting a proposed course of action, typically including costs, benefits and risks. I drafted a detailed business case demonstrating how remote work had improved my team's performance metrics.
- **go to bat for someone** – to support or defend someone, especially in a difficult situation; to advocate on their behalf. Stuart went to bat for Gemma in the leadership meeting, risking his own credibility to secure her flexibility.
- **political capital** – the trust, goodwill and influence a person has accumulated within an organisation, which can be expended to achieve goals. Managers must decide when to spend their political capital on issues that truly matter to their teams.
- **set a precedent** – to establish an example or standard that is likely to be followed in similar future cases. Granting her request might set a precedent that other senior employees would expect to follow.
- **run something on a handshake** – to operate an agreement informally, based on trust rather than formal documentation. She insisted on a written contract rather than running the arrangement on a handshake and good faith.

3. Performance & Metrics

Language for discussing work output and measurable results.

- **sprint velocity** – a measure of the amount of work a team completes during a fixed time period (sprint) in agile project management. Our sprint velocity increased by thirty-two per cent once the team settled into a remote working rhythm.
- **defect rate** – the proportion of errors, bugs or flaws found in delivered work or products. The engineering team maintained the lowest defect rate in the division despite working remotely.
- **exemplary** – serving as an excellent example; outstanding in quality or performance. Her performance reviews had been exemplary throughout two years of remote work.
- **performance benchmarks** – measurable standards or reference points used to evaluate the quality or success of work. The trial arrangement was conditional on meeting clearly defined performance benchmarks every quarter.
- **knowledge transfer** – the process of sharing expertise, skills and information between individuals or teams. Structured knowledge transfer through pair programming proved more effective than informal office conversations.
- **individual contributor** – an employee who performs work directly rather than managing others; a non-managerial professional. Even high-performing individual contributors were subject to the new attendance requirements.

4. Organisational Dynamics

Expressions relating to company structure, decision-making, and workplace culture.

- **C-suite** – the group of the most senior executives in an organisation, whose titles typically begin with 'Chief'. The return-to-office policy originated from the C-suite and was non-negotiable at lower management levels.
- **come from the top** – to originate from senior leadership or the highest levels of an organisation. This directive has come from the top – there's limited scope for departmental interpretation.
- **strategic shift** – a significant change in an organisation's overall direction, approach or priorities. Management framed the mandate as a strategic shift towards in-person collaboration rather than a policy reversal.
- **pitch something upstairs** – to present a proposal or idea to higher levels of management or senior leadership. He was reluctant to pitch the flexible arrangement upstairs without stronger supporting data.
- **retention issue** – a concern related to keeping valuable employees from leaving the organisation. The manager reframed the request as a retention issue to emphasise the risk of losing key talent.
- **osmosis** – the gradual, often unconscious, absorption of knowledge or skills through proximity and exposure to others (metaphorical use). Junior staff learn through osmosis when they overhear senior colleagues discussing complex problems.



Norman Borlaug

(1914-2009) was an American **agronomist**¹ whose development of **high-yield**², **disease-resistant**³ wheat varieties **sparked**⁴ the Green Revolution and **is credited with**⁵ saving over a billion lives from starvation. Working at Mexico's International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre from the 1940s onwards, Borlaug pioneered **cross-breeding**⁶ techniques that dramatically increased crop productivity across the developing world. By 1963, more than 95 percent of Mexican wheat came from his **cultivars**⁷; Pakistan achieved wheat **self-sufficiency**⁸ by 1968, India in all cereals by 1974. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970, Borlaug remained a **tireless**⁹ advocate for agricultural science and **food security**¹⁰ until his death. His legacy endures through institutions like CIMMYT and the annual Borlaug Dialogue, which in 2026 addresses intensifying hunger, amid climate volatility and conflict-challenges that **underscore**¹¹ the continued relevance of his life's work.

¹ agronomist ˈəˌɡrənəmɪst **agronom**, **naukowiec zajmujący się uprawą roślin**

² high-yield haɪ ˈjiːld **wysokowydajny**

³ disease-resistant dɪˈziːz rɪˈzɪstənt **odporny na choroby**

⁴ to spark sth tə spɑːk ˈsʌmθɪŋ tuː **zapoczątkować, wywołać coś**

⁵ to be credited with sth tə biː ˈkreditɪd wɪð ˈsʌmθɪŋ **przypisywać komuś zasługę za coś**

⁶ crossbreeding ˈkrosbrɪːdɪŋ **krzyżowanie**

⁷ cultivar ˈkʌltɪvɑː **odmiana uprawna rośliny**

⁸ self-sufficiency self səˈfɪjnsi **samowystarczalność**

⁹ tireless ˈtaɪələs **niestrudzony**

¹⁰ food security fuːd sɪˈkjʊərəti **bezpieczeństwo żywnościowe**

¹¹ to underscore sth tə ˌʌndəˈskoː ˈsʌmθɪŋ **podkreślać, uwypuklać coś**



Simone de Beauvoir

(1908-1986) was a French **existentialist**¹² philosopher, novelist and feminist theorist whose **seminal**¹³ work *The Second Sex* (1949) **laid the intellectual foundations for**¹⁴ modern feminism. Achieving the second-highest score in France's philosophy agrégation examination at the age of twenty-one, making her the youngest candidate to pass the exam, de Beauvoir **forged**¹⁵ a lifelong intellectual partnership with Jean-Paul Sartre and co-founded the influential leftist journal *Les Temps Modernes* in 1945. Her **magisterial**¹⁶ analysis of women's oppression – famously declaring ‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’ – **dissected**¹⁷ how **patriarchal**¹⁸ societies construct femininity as **subordinate**¹⁹ **otherness**²⁰. Beyond philosophy, she won the prestigious Prix Goncourt for her novel *The Mandarins* (1954). Translated into English in 1959 and again in 2009, *The Second Sex* continues to shape feminist discourse worldwide; the annual Simone de Beauvoir Prize, awarded in 2024 to Ivorian activist Marie-Paule Djegue Okri, honours her enduring legacy.

¹² existentialist ˌegzɪˈstɛnʃəlɪst **egzystencjalista**

¹³ seminal ˈsemɪnəl **przełomowy, kluczowy dla dalszego rozwoju**

¹⁴ to lay the foundations for sth tə leɪ ðə ˈfaʊnˌdeɪʃnz fɔː ˈsʌmθɪŋ **położyć fundamenty pod coś**

¹⁵ to forge sth tə ˈfɔːdʒ ˈsʌmθɪŋ tuː **zbudować, stworzyć coś**

¹⁶ magisterial ˌmædʒɪˈstɪəriəl **mistrzowski, monumentalny**

¹⁷ to dissect sth tə ˈdaɪˌsekt ˈsʌmθɪŋ tuː **przeanalizować coś szczegółowo, rozłożyć coś na czynniki pierwsze**

¹⁸ patriarchal ˌpætriˈɑːkl **patriarchalny**

¹⁹ subordinate səˈbɔːdɪnət **podporządkowany, podrzędny**



Charlie Munger

(1924-2023) was an American investor, lawyer and **vice chairman**²¹ of Berkshire Hathaway whose **multidisciplinary**²² approach to business judgement profoundly influenced modern **value investing**²³. Meeting Warren Buffett at dinner in 1959, Munger **steered**²⁴ Berkshire away from **cigar-butt**²⁵ bargains towards acquiring exceptional businesses at fair prices – a philosophy Buffett credited as the ‘architecture’ of their empire. Beyond Berkshire, where he served as vice chairman from 1978 until his death, Munger founded the law firm Munger, Tolles & Olson, chaired newspaper publisher Daily Journal Corporation, and sat on Costco's board. His fortune reached USD 2.3 billion by early 2023. Renowned for his **acerbic**²⁶ **wit**²⁷ and insistence on ‘elementary worldly wisdom’ drawn from psychology, mathematics and history, Munger died aged 99 in November 2023. The Daily Journal's equity portfolio – untouched since his passing – stands as **testament**²⁸ to his patient, disciplined investment philosophy.

²⁰ otherness ˈʌðənəs **inność, bycie innym**

²¹ vice chairman vaɪs ˈtʃeəmən **wiceprezes**

²² multidisciplinary ˌmʌltɪˈdɪsəplɪnəri **multidyscyplinarny, wielodyscyplinarny**

²³ value investing ˈvæljuː ɪnˈvestɪŋ **inwestowanie wartościowe, strategia inwestycyjna oparta na kupowaniu niedowartościowanych akcji**

²⁴ to steer sth tə stɪə ˈsʌmθɪŋ tuː **kierować czymś, prowadzić coś**

²⁵ cigar-butt sɪˈɡɑː bʌt **niedopałek cygara; tu: firma w stanie upadłości, z której można jeszcze wycisnąć ostatni zysk**

²⁶ acerbic əˈsɜːbɪk **cierpki, uszczypliwy**

²⁷ wit wɪt **dowcip, poczucie humoru**

²⁸ testament ˈtestəmənt tuː **świadeństwo, dowód**

The Odyssey

Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey' is nothing if not ambitious: a USD 250 million retelling of Homer's epic, shot entirely on IMAX 70 mm film and spanning nearly three hours. Matt Damon anchors the picture as Odysseus, the wily king whose decade-long journey home from Troy becomes a **gauntlet**¹ of mythical trials – the Cyclops, the Sirens, entanglement with the sorceress Circe (Charlize Theron). Back in Ithaca, Anne Hathaway's Penelope **fends off**² suitors, while Tom Holland's Telemachus **grapples with**³ his father's absence. Zendaya appears as the goddess Athena; Robert Pattinson plays the chief suitor Antinous.

Nolan opts for a grounded, almost austere interpretation of Greek mythology, and the results cleave critics cleanly in two. Admirers hail the film as a masterpiece, praising its technical **virtuosity**⁴, Hoyte van Hoytema's cinematography and Holland's **standout**⁵ turn. Detractors, however, are **unsparing**⁶: Time dismissed it as 'a dazzling **misfire**⁷', while The New Yorker lamented that Nolan **renders**⁸ the epic prosaic. Complaints centre on **leaden**⁹ pacing, overly dark visuals and dialogue that **drags**¹⁰ where it ought to **soar**¹¹.

The film is undeniably a feat of craft – the first to be captured entirely on the new IMAX 70 mm cameras – but whether it succeeds as drama or merely spectacle depends entirely on your tolerance for Nolan's **cerebral**¹² **restraint**¹³. Expect admiration, not affection.

Director: Christopher Nolan

Cast: Matt Damon, Anne Hathaway, Tom Holland, Zendaya, Charlize Theron, Lupita Nyong'o, Robert Pattinson, Samantha Morton, John Leguizamo, Jon Bernthal, Benny Safdie



Production Studio: Universal Pictures / Syncopy

Release date: July 17, 2026 (United States and United Kingdom); world premiere 6 July 2026 (London)

Genres: Epic, Drama, Mythology

¹ gauntlet 'gɔːntlæt *tu:* seria trudnych prób, ciąg wyzwania

² to fend off sb/sth *tə fend ɒf 'sʌmbədi 'sʌmθɪŋ* odpierać kogoś/coś, bronić się przed kimś/czymś

³ to grapple with sth *tə 'græpl wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ* zmagać się z czymś, borykać się z czymś

⁴ virtuosity 'vɜːtʃu'bsəti wirtuozeria, mistrzostwo techniczne

⁵ standout 'stændaʊt wyróżniający się, wyjątkowy

⁶ unsparing ʌn'speərɪŋ bezlitosny, bezwzględny

⁷ misfire 'mɪs'faɪə *tu:* pudło,

nietrafiony strzał

⁸ to render sth *tə 'rendə 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* przedstawiać, ukazywać coś

⁹ leaden 'ledn *tu:* nużący

¹⁰ to drag *tə dræg tu:* wlec się, ciągnąć się

¹¹ to soar *tə soʊ tu:* być efektownym, zwieżłym, błyskotliwym

¹² cerebral sə'rei:brəl *tu:* intelektualny

¹³ restraint rɪ'streɪnt powściągliwość, umiar

'Thinking, Fast and Slow'¹ – Daniel Kahneman

Daniel Kahneman's 'Thinking, Fast and Slow' remains an essential text for anyone who **fancies themselves**² a rational decision-maker. The Nobel laureate dissects the dual architecture of human cognition: System 1, our **lightning-quick**³ intuitive apparatus, and System 2, the plodding **deliberative**⁴ overseer that ought to keep our mental house in order, but often **nods off**⁵ **at the wheel**⁶. Through decades of experimental research, Kahneman exposes the **heuristics**⁷ and biases that **hijack**⁸ judgement, from anchoring effects to the **availability cascade**⁹, demonstrating that even experts routinely **fall prey to**¹⁰ systematic errors.

The prose is lucid and the examples compelling, though critics rightly note that some of the supporting research – particularly around priming – has since **failed replication**¹¹. Others find Kahneman's reliance on clever puzzles occasionally gimmicky, and the book frustrates readers seeking **actionable**¹² remedies rather than a **diagnostic**¹³ catalogue of **cognitive frailty**¹⁴. Yet these are quibbles. With over 2.6 million copies sold and enduring influence across economics, psychology and management, 'Thinking, Fast and Slow' stands as a landmark in popular science. Managers tempted to **trust their gut**¹⁵ will find it a **bracing**¹⁶ corrective; the rest of us will recognise ourselves on nearly every page. Humbling, illuminating and indispensable.



Author: Daniel Kahneman

Publisher: Media Rodzina (Polish edition); original: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Publication date: 2012 (Polish edition); 25 October 2011 (original English edition)

¹ 'Thinking, Fast and Slow' 'θɪŋkɪŋ fəːst ænd sləʊ polska wersja tytułu: „Pułapki myślenia”

² to fancy oneself sb *tə 'fænsi wʌn'self 'sʌmbədi* uważać się za kogoś, mieć się za kogoś

³ lightning-quick 'laɪtnɪŋ kwɪk błyskawiczny, bardzo szybki

⁴ deliberative dɪ'lɪbəreɪtɪv rozważający, refleksyjny

⁵ to nod off *tə nɒd ɒf* zdrzemnąć się, zasnąć

⁶ at the wheel ət ðə wi:l *tu:* za sterem, u sterów

⁷ heuristics hjuə'rɪstɪks heurystyka (sposób rozwiązywania problemów, który polega na wykorzystaniu uproszczonych zasad, doświadczenia lub intuicji, zamiast dokładnego analizowania wszystkich możliwych opcji)

⁸ to hijack sth *tə 'haɪdʒæk 'sʌmθɪŋ tu:* zawłaszczyć coś, przejąć

kontrolę nad czymś

⁹ availability cascade ə'veɪlə'bɪləti kæk'skeɪd kaskada dostępności (zjawisko psychologiczne)

¹⁰ to fall prey to sth *tə fɔ:l preɪ tə 'sʌmθɪŋ* paść ofiarą czegoś

¹¹ to fail replication *tə feɪl ,replɪ'keɪʃn* nie udać się w próbie powtórzenia (eksperymentu)

¹² actionable 'ækʃnəbl *tu:* praktyczny, możliwy do zastosowania

¹³ diagnostic 'daɪəg'nɒstɪk diagnostyczny, opisujący problem

¹⁴ cognitive frailty 'kɒgnətɪv 'freɪlti ułomność poznawcza, słabość procesów myślowych

¹⁵ to trust one's gut *tə trʌst wʌnz gʌt* zaufać intuicji, działać instynktownie

¹⁶ bracing 'breɪsɪŋ *tu:* orzeźwiający, otrzeźwiający

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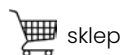
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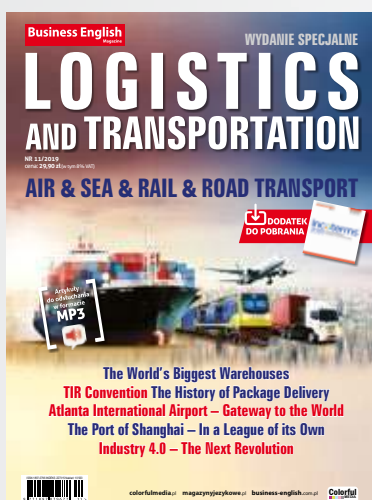
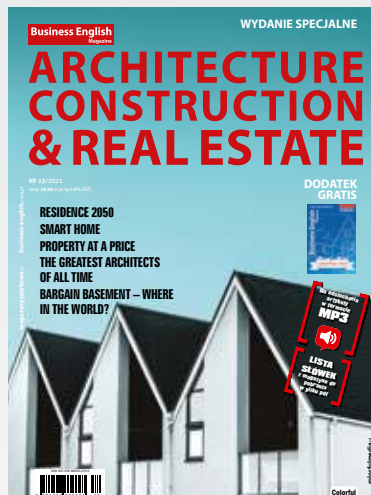
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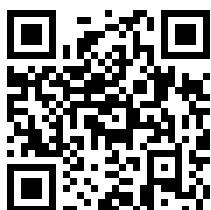
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