

The Ostróda-Elbląg Canal is especially worthy of attention, as its hydro-technical equipment, particularly the inclined planes, are a world-class monument. After more than 150 years of almost uninterrupted operation, these devices have been subjected to thorough renovation and, since 2015, they are able to once again reliably serve the visiting tourists and water sports enthusiasts.

Nowhere else in the world do we find such fully effective machinery powered by water wheels, able to carry over 60-ton vessels up a hundred-meter hill on dry land. Although these devices were built more than 155 years ago for commercial transport, they continue to successfully function today, serving tourists and water sports enthusiasts. This nineteenth century engineering marvel consist of five inclined planes designed to overcome almost 100-meter difference in water levels between Lake Pniewo of Mazury and Lake Drużno of Łużyce, as well as four locks: "Ostróda", "Ruś", "Zielona" and "Międzyzn". Ship crossing on dry land via the Canal route is an unforgettable experience, from both technical and natural standpoint.

The Ostróda-Elbląg Ship Transport Company owns the White Fleet, which sails along this historic trail. The Canal also has its local branches: from Ostróda to Stare Jabłonki and from Międzyzn to Iława. All four locks of the system are located within the Ostróda County. They also serve to overcome differences in water levels. The chief designer and builder of the canal system – G.J. Steenke, also tested another way of overcoming the difference in water levels, by digging a channel inside a man-made causeway built across Lake Karnickie. In this way, the water surface level was about two meters higher than the level inside the lake. This solution enabled water navigation on the Międzyzn-Iława section.

In 2007, "Rzeczpospolita" organized a poll designed to identify the seven wonders of Poland. The Ostróda-Elbląg Canal was named as one of them. Due to the historical nature of the devices, the President of the Republic of Poland named the Canal a historical monument. The system of inclined planes also aspires to be placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Gallery: [Ostróda-Elbląg Canal](#)