

WSSE INFO

MAGAZINE OF THE WAŁBRZYCH SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE "INVEST-PARK"

#MEANSUCCESS.

FROM THE EDITOR



Maciej Badora, President of the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK".

Polish Investment Zone

Changes in the investment support policy concerning the functioning of special economic zones have been implemented. Territorial restrictions on the project location have been removed, enabling investors to use preferential conditions while doing business anywhere in Poland. The reform is intended to increase the quality of new investment projects and contribute to a more sustainable development of the entire country.

The changes are part of the mechanism of strengthening Poland's competitive advantage in the international arena. They result from the changing economic and social conditions all over Europe. It is evident that after two decades of functioning of special economic zones in Poland we are in a whole new reality, and we should react to this.

The preferential conditions will be available to investors who have met the quantitative criteria, such as the number of newly generated jobs or the amount of capital expenditure, or the qualitative ones, concerning the innovativeness of the project. Lowering the quantitative requirements for areas with a low number of new investment projects will offer the possibility of carrying out relatively small projects that will be eligible for tax exemptions. It will translate into a more sustainable development of the country. The qualitative criteria will be used when evaluating projects with high added value, based on investing in new technologies and generating well-paying jobs.

Due to the fact that the entire territory of Poland will be covered with the preferential status, opportunities for micro, small and medium-sized companies will improve. They will no longer be forced to relocate to an area covered with the status of a special economic zone. We are currently holding meetings with SME representatives in the communes where the zone functions in order to make them aware of the new regulations..



The Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK" is an area offering preferential conditions to investors in south-western Poland. Locating a business operation within the WSEZ makes the investor eligible for tax exemptions and a number of other forms of support from the company managing the zone.



JULY 2018 5/15

If we stand still, we go backwards

Bogdan Koźuchowicz, Chair of the Supervisory Board of the WSEZ "INVEST-PARK" and Mayor of Świebodzice, on the influence and development of the Wałbrzych zone and the attractiveness of the region to investors.

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PAKIET DLA MIAST ŚREDNICH

- **SUBSIDIES
FOR ENTREPRENEURS**
- **UP TO PLN 20 M
OF SUPPORT PER PROJECT**
- **DEADLINE FOR
APPLICATIONS
– 5 DECEMBER 2018**



MINISTERSTWO
INWESTYCJI
I ROZWOJU

STRATEGIC PROJECT OF THE MINISTRY
OF INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF THE STRATEGY
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In the current year, a total of **PLN 600 million** will be allocated to SMEs under the Package for Medium-Sized Cities.

PLN 100 million will be available to entrepreneurs from the SME sector under the Eastern Poland Operational Program, and **PLN 500 million** will be distributed within the Intelligent Development Program to micro, small and medium-sized companies carrying out investment projects in medium-sized cities and in adjacent communes.

Applications can be submitted in five rounds:

Round 1 – from 20 March to 9 May 2018

Round 2 – from 10 May to 30 June 2018

Round 3 – from 1 July to 31 August 2018

Round 4 – from 1 September to 31 October 2018

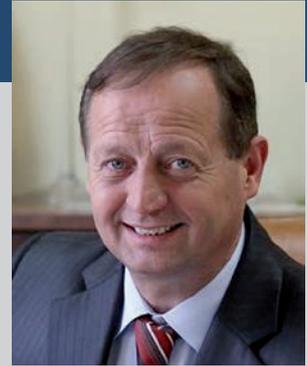
Round 5 – from 1 November to 5 December 2018.

Detailed information about the application procedure can be found in the tab
“Applications dedicated to medium-sized cities in 2018” on the website:

www.mii.gov.pl/rozwoj-miast

If we stand still, we go backwards

Bogdan Kożuchowicz, Chair of the Supervisory Board of the WSEZ "INVEST-PARK" and Mayor of Świebodzice, on the influence and development of the Wałbrzych zone and the attractiveness of the region to investors.



WSSE INFO: You have observed the functioning of the Wałbrzych zone as both the head of a commune where a subzone exists and the chair of a body that manages the zone. In your opinion, has this instrument turned out to be successful throughout the two decades of its functioning? How will the changes proposed by the government affect it?

BOGDAN KOŻUCHOWICZ: The establishment of special economic zones has undoubtedly affected the development of the entire region. At the moment of creation, the "parent zone" consisted of four subzones in the southern part of Lower Silesia. Now this number has grown to almost 60 areas in four provinces. The inclusion of new areas has directly influenced their development and improved their attractiveness to investors. The subzone in Świebodzice was set up relatively recently, but from my perspective it was a necessary step enabling the town to further develop. This was the reason why I lobbied for the establishment of the zone in my commune, which enables investors to use preferential conditions. At present almost the entire plot covered by the zone is being used by tenants. The results are hard to overestimate – both in the micro- and macro-scale, and from the social perspective.

Świebodzice has become an attractive place to live and work in. The newly proposed changes in the functioning of the zones do away with the notion of borders – the so-called subzones will be eliminated in order to provide a stimulus for the entire country to sustainably develop. What is important and worth emphasizing, the changes were introduced at the right time, when the perspective of the end of functioning of special economic zones – which was planned for 2026 – was approaching. This date would also be the deadline for using tax exemptions by companies. Under the new rules, using the preferential conditions will be possible during a period of 10 to 15 years. I think that this solution has been intended to reassure the entrepreneurs and prevent a decrease in investment intensity.

Poland is still ranked among the most attractive destinations for investors in Europe, particularly its eastern and central part. Taking into consideration the changing economic reality and the new investment policy, will Poland manage to maintain this status?

Poland is the geographical center of Europe. Because of its situation, it is a natural gateway connecting markets in the West and East. While choosing the location for a business operation, foreign investors analyze it in the perspective of a dozen or even several dozen years into the future. Since the trend for foreign direct investment is maintained, I think that our position is not threatened. Importantly, many domestic companies are also moving inside the zone, accumulating capital and using the existing preferences.

Special economic zones are stereotypically associated with large multinational corporations.

This is true. However, almost half of the tenants in the WSEZ are small and medium-sized companies. There are also some micro-companies or family businesses employing just a handful people. I must stress that throughout the two decades of the WSEZ existence I have seen much effort put into attracting small and medium-sized firms and helping them once they became tenants. This is probably why this ratio is so high. It is extremely important to make sure that special economic zones contribute to the development of Polish industry, building domestic brands, creating a network of suppliers and connecting Polish contractors with foreign firms.

Apart from tax exemptions and attractive plots, one of the most important factors influencing the investor's decision is the availability of skilled workers. In this regard, we see an increased demand for specialists and graduates of universities of technology.



What is your opinion about the reform of the educational system?

I used to be a teacher, so I've been closely following the reform. I think it was necessary because education was beginning to depart from the actual market needs. It was therefore necessary to involve employees in the educational process, to connect businesses and schools. Professional and technical schools are supposed to train workers with practical skills, but it is impossible without entrepreneurs' support. It is hardly surprising. The dual system of education has been the standard in many countries, and it should become standard in Poland too. The reform affects vocational education not only at the level of secondary schools, but also at the level of universities, which pleases me very much. I see a tendency for young people who went away to study in big cities to return to their hometowns after graduation – they see that attractive and well-paying jobs can be found near home. Toyota's decision to further expand the plant in Wałbrzych or Daimler's engine factory in Jawor bode well. They confirm the positive trend in the labor market. We must remember that the development of such huge facilities is connected with the creation of an entire network of local suppliers, partners or service providers.

Are there plans to increase the area of the subzone in Świebodzice, especially in the face of the proposed changes?

Indeed, we are waiting for the new mechanisms to be implemented. This is why no such plans are being made, because they may well turn out unnecessary. But it doesn't mean that we are doing nothing – if we stand still, we go backwards, as they say. We have adopted a development study and we have a well-thought-out strategy for the next few years. We are talking with entrepreneurs and inviting them to invest in Świebodzice, as exemplified by Defalin's recent decision to move to the subzone. I assure you that it is not the end of investing in the town and in the entire Wałbrzych zone. ■

Over 1,000 jobs



at the new engine factory in Jawor

Mercedes-Benz Cars has finished the construction of the largest engine production and assembly floor in the factory in Jawor. The plant will be carbon neutral. Over 1,000 people will work here, twice more than announced during the ceremony of laying the cornerstone last year.

The topping-out ceremony was attended by **Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology; Markus Schäfer, Member of the Divisional Board of Mercedes-Benz Cars in charge of production and supply chain; Frank Deiß, Head of Production Powertrain Mercedes-Benz Cars; Rainer Ruess, Head of Production Planning Mercedes-Benz Cars; and Dr Andreas Schenkel, CEO Mercedes-Benz Manufacturing Poland, as well as other guests from business and politics.**

To cope with high demand for high-tech four cylinder engines, the company has decided to create 500 additional jobs at the Jawor plant.

"In our CO₂ - neutral plant in Jawor, we will build highly efficient engines for our hybrid vehicles and conventionally powered passenger cars. The construction of this plant is an investment in the future and an important milestone on our way to the mobility of the future. This is a strong sign of our commitment to the location and to German-Polish friendship," said **Markus Schäfer**.

The factory will produce four-cylinder diesel and petrol engines for hybrid as well as conventional vehicles and will supply plants

of Mercedes-Benz Cars around the globe. The different engine variants will be produced alongside the corresponding crank-cases on highly flexible lines enabling quick reactions to market demand. The engines produced in Jawor will combine modern engine technology and partial electrification using 48 volt technology. Daimler relies on the coexistence of different drive technologies with an intelligent modular system consisting of highly efficient high-tech combustion engines in combination with 48 volt on-board electrical systems, as well as consistent hybridization and purely electric drives with batteries or fuel cells.

"As a so-called 'greenfield' project, the new engine plant in Jawor offers an excellent opportunity to establish an integrated production concept on a newly built site. Jawor will be our benchmark regarding green high-tech production. It is of course a challenge to transfer the same measures into existing, historically grown factories in our powertrain production network, but it is our aim to implement as many as possible, using Jawor to test feasibility", stated Frank Deiß.

Industry 4.0 and Green Production

Mercedes-Benz Cars is among the first large industrial companies in Poland to sign contracts with local green power and heat sup-

pliers and the site in Jawor will be among the first CO₂-neutral factories for the company as a first measure derived from the "Purpose" initiative of Mercedes-Benz Cars.

100 percent of the electricity will be obtained from renewable sources and the heat requirement is obtained via a power plant directly at the factory fence, which provides the energy from renewable raw materials (e.g. wood chips). About 600 sensors will record energy consumption, which can be accessed and controlled on touch screens in real time, reducing the energy requirements of the factory.

Industry 4.0 applications such as a real-time management information system and digital shop floor management will play an important role in the new engine factory. Within logistics, driverless transport systems will be used to transport materials, which can be tracked and traced at all times using RFID (Radio Frequency Identification), making physical inventory unnecessary. Other measures planned are the use of Augmented Reality and Big Data analyses to support the employees during the assembly processes, avoid errors at an early stage and prevent machine failures. The goal is to also become paperless in production and in administrative areas.

Jadwiga Emilewicz: "The automotive industry is a key branch of Polish industry, and this is why it is so good that a company with such a long tradition and prestige has decided to launch a production of engines in our country. It is said that the engine is the heart of the car. Soon a large part of the hearts of German cars will come from Poland. The investment of Daimler AG certainly contributes to strengthening the trade relations between Poland and Germany. It is also a good basis for joint action for the development of automotive technology."

The Jawor Factory has a production area of 180,000 m², 40,000 m² larger than initially planned, on a site of 50 hectares overall. Series production of engines in Jawor is scheduled to start in 2019, and it will involve over 1,000 people.

"In our new engine factory in Jawor, we will be setting standards in the area of Industry 4.0, resulting in efficient and flexible production processes involving ergonomic work places," said **Andreas Schenkel**. "We have an excellent cooperation with Polish politicians and local authorities, our building contractors as well as with our competent, motivated employees in Poland and Germany. Currently, more than 900 people are working here on the construction site, enabling us to produce highly efficient engines in proven Mercedes-Benz quality in 2019". ■



From the left: Patrick Walz, Head of Planning and Design of the Jawor plant on behalf of Daimler AG; Rainer Ruess, Head of Production Planning Mercedes-Benz Cars; Markus Schäfer, Member of the Divisional Board of Mercedes-Benz Cars in charge of production and supply chain; Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology; Andreas Schenkel, CEO Mercedes-Benz Manufacturing Poland; Emilian Bera, Mayor of Jawor; Frank Deiß, Head of Production Powertrain Mercedes-Benz Cars.



From the left: Andreas Schenkel, CEO Mercedes-Benz Manufacturing Poland; Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology; Markus Schäfer, Member of the Divisional Board of Mercedes-Benz Cars in charge of production and supply chain; Ewa Łabno-Fałęcka, Corporate Communication and External Affairs, Mercedes-Benz Polska; Frank Deiß, Head of Production Powertrain Mercedes-Benz Cars.

BSH constructs the Logistics Center in Wrocław



BSH, a manufacturer of household appliances, has begun the construction of the new Logistics Center in Wrocław. Located at 143 Żmigrodzka St, it is the most recent investment project of the BSH Group. The facility with a floor area of 30,000 m² will support two factories of refrigerators and ovens functioning in the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK".

The ceremony of laying the cornerstone was attended by representatives of the Municipal Office, the Wałbrzych zone, the management board of BSH Home Appliances Group, the management board of BSH Poland and employees. It is another important investment project of the BSH Group in Wrocław.

Beginning in 2019 the Logistics Center will provide services to two Wrocław-based factories where refrigerators and ovens have been made since September 2017. The appliances will be distributed to customers all over Europe via the Logistics Center. The project is carried out to BSH's top standards regarding safety, environmental protection and comfort of work. Already at the stage of design, aspects such as minimizing energy losses, noise reduction or using natural lighting were emphasized. Since the company increasingly uses environmentally-friendly forms of transport, the Center will be provided with a siding for transporting refrigerators and ovens abroad by train.

"Today's ceremony of laying the cornerstone for the construction of the Logistics Center proves that BSH is strengthening its position as a leading producer of domestic appliances in Poland and Europe and one of the biggest employers in Poland. We have been working to be in this position for 25 years. I take pride in our dynamic growth and I promise that we have no intention of slowing down," said **Konrad Pokutycki**, President of the Board of BSH Poland.

The beginning of the construction of the new Logistics Center is part of BSH's investment plan in Wrocław, which is worth almost PLN 500 million. Currently the company is conducting large-scale recruitment for positions connected with manufacturing and machine operating. Information about the vacancies can be found in local press and on pracuj.pl internet website.



BSH Sprzęt Gospodarstwa Domowego sp. z o.o. belongs to the international BSH Home Appliances Group. In Poland the company offers a portfolio of brands such as Bosch, Siemens, Gaggenau and Zelmer. BSH owns six factories in Poland: washing machines, dishwashers and clothes dryers are produced in three facilities in Łódź, ovens and refrigerators – in Wrocław, whereas small electrical and home-ware are made in Rogoźnica near Rzeszów. Apart from the factories, BSH also owns shared services centers in Poland. They provide services to the BSH group all over the world in areas such as IT, accounting, foreign trade and centralized purchases. Moreover, the group is developing an R&D centre in Łódź and the Digital & E-Commerce Competence Centre. As a result, Polish engineers contribute to the design and production of technologically advanced appliances and devise new solutions connected with the Internet.

BSH Home Appliances Group was set up in 1967 as a joint venture between Robert Bosch GmbH (Stuttgart) and Siemens AG (Munich). Since January 2015 it has been fully owned by the Bosch Group. Throughout its 50-year history, it has evolved from a local German exporter into the second biggest manufacturer of home appliances in the world. Its total workforce today is almost 62,000, and in 2017 it posted annual sales of 13.8 billion euros. BSH has 43 factories all over the world and produces a full range of modern home appliances.

"BSH was among the first representatives of leading domestic appliances corporations that invested in Poland after the political transformation. Twenty-five years later, the company has solidified its position and succeeded in establishing a stable network of suppliers and partners. We are pleased at the fact that the growth of the corporation is currently connected with Lower Silesia," stressed **Maciej Badora**, President of the WSEZ. ■

Quick meetings

– long-lasting relations



For the fourth time entrepreneurs from all over Poland took part in the fast business presentations organized by the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone. INVEST-PARK Business Mixer attracted representatives of over 20 industries, mostly from the automotive sector.

“This event has become a permanent element of our calendar, because we are convinced that cooperation is much better than competition,” said **Maciej Badora**, President of the Wałbrzych zone. “The meeting enjoys wide interest, which is why over 200 entrepreneurs have gathered here again to co-create a business-friendly climate.”

The untypical formula for the event has been borrowed from the idea of speed dating, which originated in the USA. Entrepreneurs meet at round tables and each of them has exactly two minutes to present their company. After all of them have given the presentations, the participants move on to the next table and the process is repeated. Six sessions or two hours later, each of them has had a chance

to establish over 50 new contacts, which could evolve into permanent cooperation.

“We’ve participated in this event for the third time, because it provides an excellent opportunity to present our knowledge and experience in the effective use of energy, machine and process management, which translates into real savings





for companies,” explains **Bogdan Plata**, President of the Board of Innpact. “We have made many new contacts as a result of the two-minute presentations. In some cases they have already transformed into permanent cooperation.”

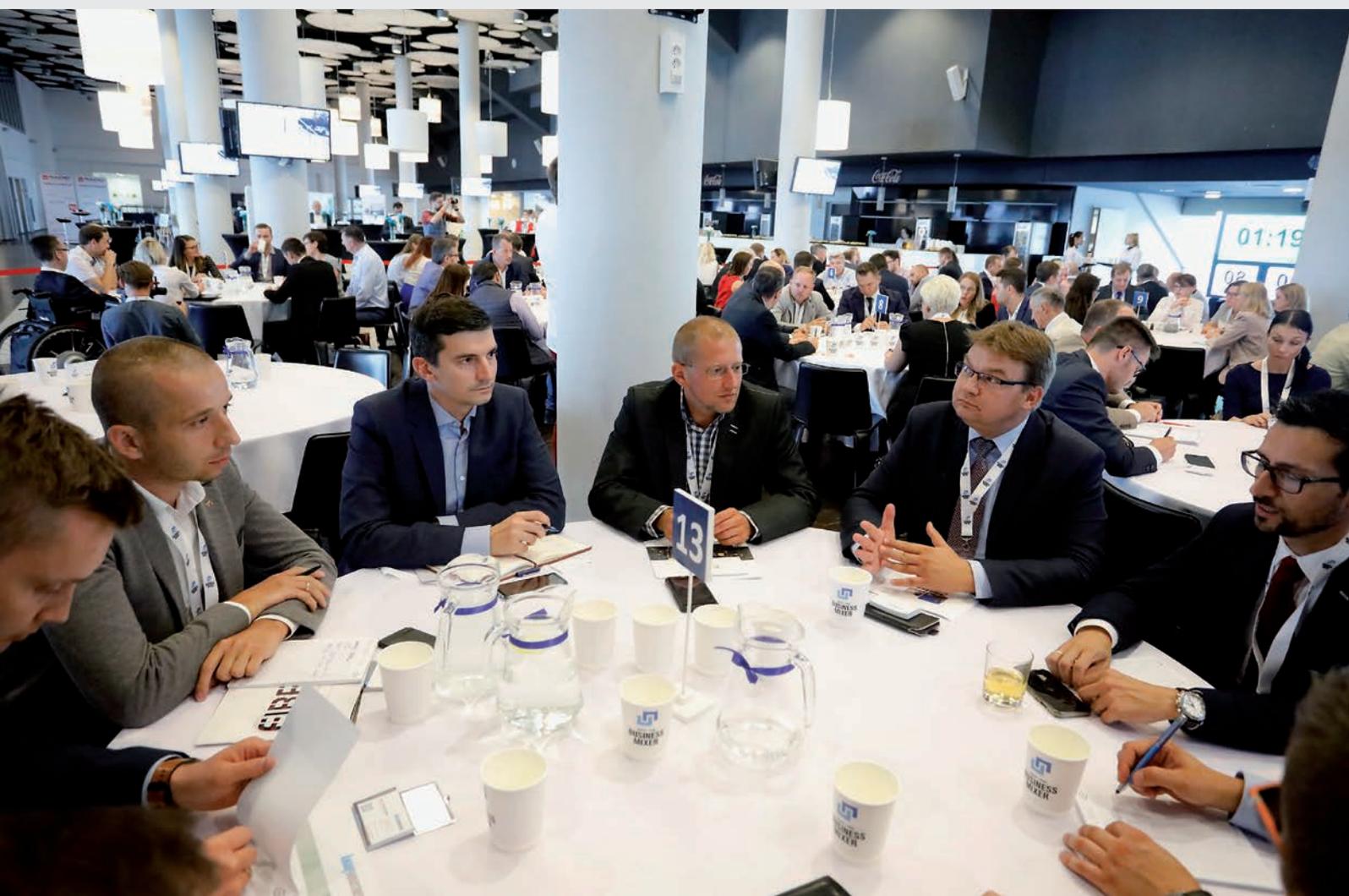
“The question is whether it is possible to outline your offer in two minutes. The answer is simple – yes, it is. You just have to make sure to focus on the crucial aspects. This is how to interest those who may need your products or services. The time to finalize the talks and discuss the details will come later,” says **Roman Masek**, technical director at Belse.

The presentations at the tables were followed by Business Networking, which was an opportunity to talk with selected partners without time limits. It was also a chance to talk for those entrepreneurs who couldn’t meet at the tables.

“Although our company normally functions in the virtual world, today we wanted to establish direct relationships,” says **Marcin Tutaj**, a representative of 3S Telekomunikacja & Data Center. “Chemistry is very important in business too. It greatly increases the likelihood to establish good, long-term cooperation.”



The event was held at Wrocław Municipal Stadium for the second time. The company managing the venue was the Main Partner of the meeting, and its sponsors included Belse, 3S Telekomunikacja & Data Center, INNPACT, Knauf Industries, Netia, Rödl & Partner, and Sendero Tax & Legal. Honorary patronage of the event was extended by the Governor of Dolnośląskie Province **Paweł Hreniak**. More than 7,000 business cards were exchanged during the meeting, and its four editions have attracted a total number of over 800 people. ■



Double of the Zone



"The Wałbrzych zone is one of the leaders in changing the negative perception of vocational education," **Anna Zalewska**, Minister of National Education, said during the Wałbrzych edition of the event. "This is where companies that are contributing to the

Industrial Revolution 4.0 are investing. The market needs the best employees, who should be trained in technical and professional schools."

Tour

Over 500 students took part in two editions of the Tour of the Zone, organized by the WSEZ in Wałbrzych and Opole. The youths could visit companies functioning in the zone and participate in workshops. The event was held as part of the functioning of the INVEST in EDU Educational Cluster.

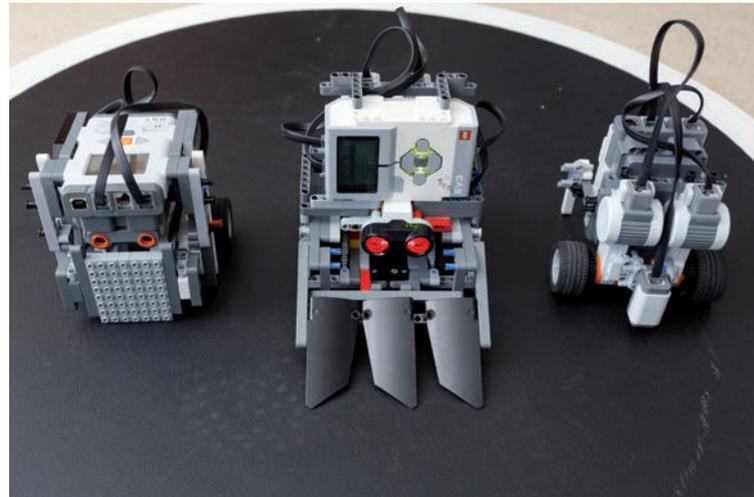


The Tour of the Zone was addressed to students of grade seven of primary schools and grade two of middle schools. The Wałbrzych edition, which was held for the third time, attracted a record number of participants – around 400 students. Over 120 students took part in the tour in Opole. The project is intended to present the most attractive technical specializations and qualifications that are in greatest demand among employers.

“It is very important for young people to have an opportunity to see what industrial production looks like. This knowledge will help them to make the right decision about their education and future professional careers,” explained **Maciej Badora**, President of the WSEZ.

Eight companies were involved in the Wałbrzych edition of the event: Toyota Motor Manufacturing Poland, Faurecia Wałbrzych, Tristone Flowtech, Ronal, Mando Corporation, NSK Steering Systems, Cersanit and Wałbrzych Coking Plant “Victoria”. The students visiting the companies could see the production floors, learn about the working conditions and the employers’ expectations concerning their staff.

“As a socially responsible business, we wanted to present different professional development opportunities to young people, to infect them with our passion for work, quality and advancement,” said **Joanna Moore** of Faurecia.



” Eight companies were involved in the Wałbrzych edition of the event: Toyota Motor Manufacturing Poland, Faurecia Wałbrzych, Tristone Flowtech, Ronal, Mando Corporation, NSK Steering Systems, Cersanit and Wałbrzych Coking Plant “Victoria”.

The tour was organized in partnership with Wrocław University of Technology and its branch in Wałbrzych. At the seat of the WSEZ, members of students' scientific associations led workshops focusing on vehicle and mobile robot construction, robotics, mechatronics and materials technology. The participants could also learn about the functioning of special economic zones and educational clusters.

The Opole edition of the tour was hosted by the Tadeusz Kościuszko Electric Schools Complex, which prepared classes on robotics and 3D printers. The school has significant achievements in these areas. Another two workshops were conducted by Opole University of Technology – this time, the young participants could learn about the functioning of electric cars, the future of the automotive industry, and the advantages of using electricity to power vehicles. They also discovered how drones can be used in the film industry or in research. In the end the students paid a visit to plants operated by Polaris, GSS and Blue Soft STC.

“The tour was a unique opportunity to see how a factory actually functions, find out which new technologies are used in industry and why work for inter-



national corporations can lead to professional development and success,” **Krzysztof Drynda**, Deputy President of the WSEZ, said during the opening of the tour in Opole.

After each workshop or visit to a plant, the participants filled in questionnaires testing the newly-acquired knowledge. In the Wałbrzych edition of the event, the main prize in the amount of PLN 2,000 was given to Public Primary School no. 15, which received the maximum number of points and triumphed over 11 other schools. In Opole, Public Primary School no. 33 turned out to be the best and also received a check for PLN 2,000. In this case, however, an extra round was necessary to select the winner because three schools received the same number of points. ■



The Chinese company Guotai-Huarong, one of the world's leading producers of electric vehicle batteries, will invest USD 45 million to erect a factory in Godzikowice.



Guotai-Huarong

invests in the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone

By 2020 GTHR, which is one of the three largest providers of electrolytes for lithium-ion batteries in the world, will finish the construction of a factory near Oława where its flagship product will be made. It is another large-scale investment project in the Lower Silesia that fits in with the Electromobility Development Plan prepared and implemented by the Ministry of Energy.

"The construction of the factory in Godzikowice by the Chinese investor Zhangjiagang Guotai-Huarong New Chemical Materials is part of the strategy of supporting the development of the electric vehicle industry in our country. We are extremely pleased that such projects are being carried out in Poland, which is becoming one of the world's leading players in this industry. In the long run, the investment will translate into greater popularity of these vehicles on our roads, and con-



sequently – a significant improvement in air quality,” said **Krzysztof Senger**, Deputy President of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency in charge of foreign investment.

The production facility of electrolytes for lithium-ion batteries in Godzikowice, Oława commune, will be among the biggest of this kind in Europe. The location of the factory will complement the European and regional network of electric vehicle industry manufacturing plants. Its annual output will make it possible to produce batteries for one million electric cars. Initially 60 people will be employed, and this number will gradually rise to 100. The land for the construction of the factory has already been purchased, and currently the investor is acquiring the necessary permits and documents.

The Chinese company Zhangjiagang Guotai-Huarong New Chemical Materials Co. Ltd. was established in 2000. It is a technologically-advanced producer of silicone organic material used in lithium batteries. It is one of the world’s three largest providers of electrolytes, operating in accordance with top standards ISO9001 and TS16949. The factory in Poland, GTHR’s third facility outside China, will double the company’s production volumes. ■

Source: Mooq
Guotai-Huarong factory in China





LEWIN BRZESKI

worthy of investment



ARTUR KOTARA

Mayor of Lewin Brzeski

Since the establishment of a WSEZ subzone in Lewin Brzeski, we have been supporting entrepreneurship more actively. Thanks to the perfect business environment we are an attractive location for all industrial sectors, especially construction and concrete production due to the proximity of natural deposits of sand and gravel that could be used in the manufacturing of prefab concrete elements.

I would like to stress that the attractiveness of the location is further increased by the following factors: proximity of higher education institutions (Opole University of Technology, Wrocław University of Technology), vocational and technical schools, land with access to utilities (gas, water, electricity, fiber-optic internet), proximity of a railway siding along the Wrocław-Katowice route, two airports (Wrocław and Pyrzowice), direct access to national road no. 94 and the A4 motorway.

An important element determining the location of any investment project is the local tax policy. Companies that will decide to situate their operations in the commune of Lewin Brzeski can count on tax exemptions in the first three years as de minimis aid (100% of exemption in the first year, and 50% in the next two years).

All I can say now is to encourage everybody to not only visit our commune, but to stay here for a longer time. Apart from advantages to business, there are many natural and tourist attractions. The possibility of spending time in a varied, active way is undoubtedly a huge asset, especially for companies whose employees would relocate and acclimatize to the new surroundings.

The commune of Lewin Brzeski is situated in the western part of Opolskie Province, at the outlet of the Nysa Kłodzka to the Odra. Lewin Brzeski, the capital of the commune, lies 25 km from Opole – the capital of Opolskie Province, and 60 km from Wrocław. The commune can be very easily accessed by national road no. 94 (Wrocław-Opole), the A4 motorway (connecting Lower and Upper Silesia with Małopolskie Province), and main railway line no. 132 (Wrocław-Bytom).

The picturesque landscape shaped by the Odra and the Nysa Kłodzka comprises wooded areas in the Stobrowski Landscape Park and four ponds belonging to the Niemodlin Ponds complex. The main tourist attractions are connected with nature and include the sports and recreational complex in the former gravel mine in Lewin Brzeski, fishing and recreational areas with facilities such as an educational path, 45 jetties and a wooden shelter, ponds in gravel pits in Kantorowice with plots for the construction of summer houses, or the renovated area of the old river bed of the Nysa Kłodzka in Lewin Brzeski, including the modernized viewing tower, four jetties, educational paths, nesting boxes and roofing for ducks and swans.



The tourist attractiveness of the commune of Lewin Brzeski results from a variety of recreation forms, from canoeing to cycling (over 80 km of marked routes) to walks along the international St Jacob pilgrimage route, eventually leading to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

The town of Lewin Brzeski has medieval origins, with monuments dating back 700 years. ■



NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTORS

The Wałbrzych zone has launched a series of meetings with local entrepreneurs to discuss the new concept of the zone's functioning and the investment opportunities in the WSEZ. The conferences were primarily addressed to micro, small and medium-sized companies. So far meetings have been held in Świdnica and Oleśnica.

What changes in the functioning of special economic zones result from the new legislation? What are the criteria for investing anywhere in Poland? What does the process of investor care look like in the Wałbrzych zone? These were some of the issues raised during the meetings with entrepreneurs.

"This is how we would like to stimulate local businesses to develop. It is important to make entrepreneurs aware of the fact that their companies – micro, small or medium-sized ones – can also function in the zone. What is more, under the new regulations it is not necessary to relocate the seat," **Marek Szukała**, Deputy President of the WSEZ, explained during the meeting in Świdnica.





The participants were acquainted with the general principles of the new law, according to which investing anywhere in Poland offers the possibility of using preferential conditions. At the moment this privilege only applies to subzones whose total area cannot exceed 25 thousand ha. Another change is the new approach to investment projects, which takes into account their quality. The entrepreneurs could also learn about the current possibilities of investing in the WSEZ and the availability of land offering tax exemptions in south-western Poland.

“The role of self-governments will be more significant under the new regulations. This is why the meetings are held in communes where the subzones function. We invite local entrepreneurs because we would like to encourage them to use the possibilities offered by the zone and become involved in the training of future employees,” **Maciej Badora**, President of the WSEZ, said during the meeting in Oleśnica.

Local entrepreneurs were also acquainted with additional forms of business support offered by County Labor Centers, Provincial Labor Centers and self-governmental units. ■



Poland runs



with INVEST-PARK



The Wałbrzych zone was again a co-organizer of the national action Poland Runs. The competition in Wałbrzych was traditionally organised by AQUA-ZDRÓJ Active Relax Center. A record number of 600 runners in different age categories took part in this year's edition. What matters most in this event is not the result, but participation and good fun.

The first event was 100 meters sprint for preschoolers, followed by 400 m run for primary school children, which was led by **Roman Magdziarczyk**, an Olympian athlete. All participants in both events received medals and lots of fruits. The main event of the day was the three-kilometer run for older teenagers and adults, but it was also open to families with children. Later there was a raffle with attractive prizes, such



as tickets to the Poland-Ireland women's basketball match, trips, sports equipment, tickets to the swimming pool and other awards sponsored by the Wałbrzych zone. The motto of the event was "Active WSEZ." ■



POLAND -

TRUE

PALS

It has been the first Polish-American economic meeting of this scale in years, concluded the participants in the Polish-American Leadership Summit in Miami.

Text by Grzegorz Sadowski

Miami was the venue for the Polish-American Leadership Summit: Investment Zone, the most important event in the economic relations between the two countries in recent years. The three-day (9–11 February) program was very intensive: over 300 attendees, nine discussion panels, networking and evening sessions, an awards gala and the Polonaise Ball. And, as a final treat, a visit to Mar-a-Lago, called “The Winter White House” by Donald Trump.

“This very important initiative complements the calendar of Polish-American political contacts by adding to them an equally important dimension: the economic one,” **Andrzej Duda** said in a special video address to the participants. “The fact that the Summit is held in 2018, on centenary of regaining independence by Poland, is of symbolic value,” he added.

“We have called ourselves PALS, because it implies good relationships. Any contact begins with a relationship, and it is impossible to establish good contact without being good pals. This is why I think that there will be even more contacts after this meeting,” said **Michał M. Lisiecki**, President of PMPG Polskie Media (the publisher of *Wprost* weekly) and the organizer of the summit.

Zbigniew Pisarski of the Casimir Pulaski Foundation, a program and content-related partner, emphasized that after political and military relations, the time has come for building economic ties. “Poland has a huge potential, in particular because of the presence of the Polish diaspora. It could be felt behind the scenes, when Americans of Polish descent expressed a willingness to guide Polish entrepreneurs,” Mr. Pisarski said.

The power industry as the key to security

The main subjects raised during the summit included economic issues and those connected with the security of Poland and Europe. They often overlapped, especially because energy security was an important point in the discussions.

Grzegorz Pytel, Chief Advisor to the Board of LOTOS Group, talked about the challenges facing Polish petrochemical corporations in the search for oil and their cooperation with the USA. “Poland is the 7th biggest economy in Europe and 20th worldwide, and we are among the fastest-growing countries in the region. Our growth needs fuel, and this is why we want to cooperate with the USA,” he said.

AMERICA,



Last year LOTOS signed a contract for the purchase of American crude oil. Under the contract, at least five cargoes of oil will be delivered by sea in 2018. "It is the first forward contract for US oil delivery in the history of Poland. Before that we imported it from Canada. We are constantly looking for new deposits and supply sources to ensure Poland's energy security, which is part of our strategy," Mr. Pytel said. **Rafał Antczak**, Deputy President of PKO BP, said that technology could be a platform for Polish-American cooperation. "In Poland there are many skilled workers and technology could naturally connect the two countries. We see the political will to strengthen the economic ties. Now is the time to help these individual contracts and I hope that our bank will participate in it," Mr. Antczak said.

Looking for start-ups

Talks revolved not only around the big business and multi-million energy contracts. PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna was represented at the summit by two companies belonging to the group – PGE Ventures and PGE Nowa Energia. The former invests in start-ups while the latter identifies and accelerates projects in early development stages. "We invest in broadly-defined electroenergy. We look for start-ups that could

contribute to the optimization of the functioning of the PGE Group while increasing our revenues and diversifying them. We look at the USA, where the biggest number of start-ups exists, from the angle of a co-investment destination as well as an arena for promoting Polish technologies," said **Piotr Czak**, President of PGE Ventures. "Many small firms are interested in cooperating with PGE. They often have interesting ideas, but they need support in refining and implementing them so that they could be used in a large corporation. Our role is to verify the projects submitted by start-ups. We observe the functioning of the American market for the acceleration, implementation and incorporation of projects. Our advantage lies in the fact that the cost of acceleration is lower in Poland. Of course, we also follow the technologies," said **Tomasz Jarmicki**, Deputy President of PGE Nowa Energia.

The summit was also attended by **Tomasz Szypuła**, President of Ptak Warsaw Expo, the largest conference and exhibition center in Central Europe. "In the USA, we can promote our innovativeness and entrepreneurship. What we need is buyers and business partners. We hope that some American suppliers will be interested in cooperating with Poland. We would



the mutual dialogue committee – this issue must be discussed because both sides have their arguments and motivations. We mustn't undermine the transatlantic relations," he said. He also called for greater economic cooperation: "There is a saying in America – those who have gold dictate the terms. The combination of money and power is very visible. The richer Poland is, the more influence it will have on what is going on," professor Chodakiewicz added.

Poland of strategic importance

Brexit, the Atlantic alliance and relations with the EU were discussed by **Daniel Kawczynski**, a Brit-

like to show them that Ptak Warsaw Expo could be a gateway to the whole Europe. Every business begins at the fair, Americans are fully aware of it," Mr. Szypuła said.

Political turmoil

Politics was discussed in parallel to economic issues. The summit was held shortly after the Polish parliament amended the act on the functioning of the Institute of National Remembrance. Many commentators said that it had a disastrous effect on Polish-American relations. However, the participants in the Miami summit mostly agreed that it was a short-term crisis. "We could say that the relations between Poland and America were marginally better a few weeks ago. But this summit is intended to switch the narrative to economy, which is a completely different subject," said **Anna Maria Anders**, Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland in charge of international dialogue.

Corey Lewandowski, a former head of Donald Trump's presidential campaign, claims that the Polish-American political relations have been best in years. "Poland is today stronger than ever before. Warsaw was one of the first destinations visited by Donald Trump as the president. He was very well received. If we combine it with Poland's declarations to spend more than 2.5% of GDP on defense, we could say that these relations are and will be stronger. I see no crisis," Mr. Lewandowski said.

Prof. **Marek Chodakiewicz**, a specialist in Polish-Jewish relations at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, appealed for calm. "It is very good that Poland has established



ish MP of Polish descent. In his opinion, the British did not want to remain in the EU as a supranational organization; he added that one day Poland could follow in their footsteps. "If Poland continues to develop at the current rate, I predict that in ten years it will become a net contributor to the EU budget. When it happens and when Polish politicians realize how much power and money they have to



transfer to Brussels, perhaps this vote will take place," Mr. Kawczynski said.

George Friedman, the guest of honor at the summit, highlighted that a key aspect of the Polish-American alliance concerns the establishment of multi-level relations, based not only on defense or politics. "I tell politicians in all the countries I visit – do not just go to Washington. It is a small town built as a seat for politicians. The rest of America does business. This is why the Miami summit is important. Relations with America must be at many levels and in many places," Mr. Friedman said to the guests during the final gala at the Eden Rock hotel.

On the first day of the summit, the Eagles of Entrepreneurship and Freedom were awarded. The special awards were received by Minister Anna Maria Anders; the LOTOS Group; **Blanka Rosenstiel**, Poland's honorary consul in Miami; Corey Lewandowski, former chief of Donald Trump's presidential campaign; and **Johny Daniels**, President of From the Depths Foundation and Mar-a-Lago Club. ■



Faurecia Wałbrzych, the commune of Głuszycza, SirBud, the commune of Strzegom and Corthinx – these are the winners of the 20th edition of the Mouflons Economic Poll 2017. The awards were presented during a gala at the Książ Castle in Wałbrzych, which was hosted by journalist and TV presenter Klaudia Carlos. The star of the evening was singer Gaba Kulka. The Wałbrzych zone was again a partner of the event.

20TH OF THE

A record number of entries was submitted to the competition – 61. Among the competitors were entrepreneurs, self-government members and institutions from several counties: Wałbrzych, Świdnica, Dzierżoniów, Kłodzko, Ząbkowice and Kamienna Góra. During the 2017 edition of the poll, awards were given in five categories, including two new ones – Our Friendly Commune and Investment of the 20 Years.

In the Responsible Business category, the Mouflon went to Faurecia Wałbrzych S.A., a WSEZ tenant. Głuszycza was chosen as the most friendly commune, and the event/initiative of the year was the European Eventing Championship organized by the commune of Strzegom and LKS Stragona. Corthinx, a WSEZ tenant from Wałbrzych specializing in the production of yachts and catamarans, became the best micro/small company, and the title of the best investment of the last two decades was awarded to the renovation of the Wodniak complex on Bystrzyckie Lake, which was carried out by SirBud. The statuettes and diplomas were presented to the winners during a ceremonial gala at the Książ Castle, which was hosted by journalist and TV pre-

senter **Klaudia Carlos**. The event ended in the concert of **Gaba Kulka**.

The Mouflons Economic Poll is organised by Kubara Lami-na S.A., a press publisher whose portfolio includes Tygodnik Wałbrzyski/NWW, Wiadomości Świdnickie and Tygodnik Dzierżoniowski. ■



Concert by Gaba Kulka



Micro/Small Company



Responsible Business

EDITION MOUFLONS



Results of the 20th edition of the Mouflons Economic Competition

Responsible Business

1. Faurecia Wałbrzych S.A.
2. Arte Social Cooperative
3. Pentair Poland Sp. z o.o.

Investment of the 20 Years

1. SirBud sp.j.
2. Aurum Usługi Budowlane
3. Angelus Silesius State School of Higher Vocational Education in Wałbrzych

Micro/Small Company

1. Corthinx Sp. z o.o.
2. Bimart s.c.
3. Medyk Zespół Usług Medycznych Sp. z o.o.

Our Friendly Commune

1. Głuszyca commune
2. Jedlina-Zdrój commune
3. Nowa Ruda commune

Event/Initiative of the Year 2017

1. Strzegom commune
2. Culture Center in Nowa RUda
3. Jedlina-Zdrój commune



Corthinx in full sail

The Wałbrzych-based producer of luxury boats has unveiled the ten-meter catamaran, designed and constructed exclusively by the company. The official launch of the CX-1000 was held in the facility functioning in the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone.

Since 2014 Corthinx has specialized in complex production of yachts, motor boats and catamarans. The company also offers large-size CNC models and industrial forms that can be used in the production of vessels and elements used in various fields, e.g. the automotive industry or furniture pro-

duction. Moreover, the Wałbrzych plant makes composite elements of luxury yachts and campers for well-known brands. The CX-1000 is the first catamaran made in Wałbrzych from scratch, i.e. from the design stage all the way to the final touch on the deck instruments.

Corthinx had been preparing to start the production line for making the catamaran since 2017. New employees were hired and trained. According to plans, small numbers of boats will be produced to ensure the highest quality of the manufacturing process.



The CX-1000 is a ten-meter catamaran with an impressive hull, large deck and many options of arranging the space in accordance with individual needs. The vessel could be used as a ferry for fast and comfortable transport of passengers, or as a living space for a private owner.

In 2017 the company set up Corthinx International, a group whose parent company is registered in Wałbrzych. It has significantly increased the company's scope of operation and opened up markets all over the world. ■





#GoodJob

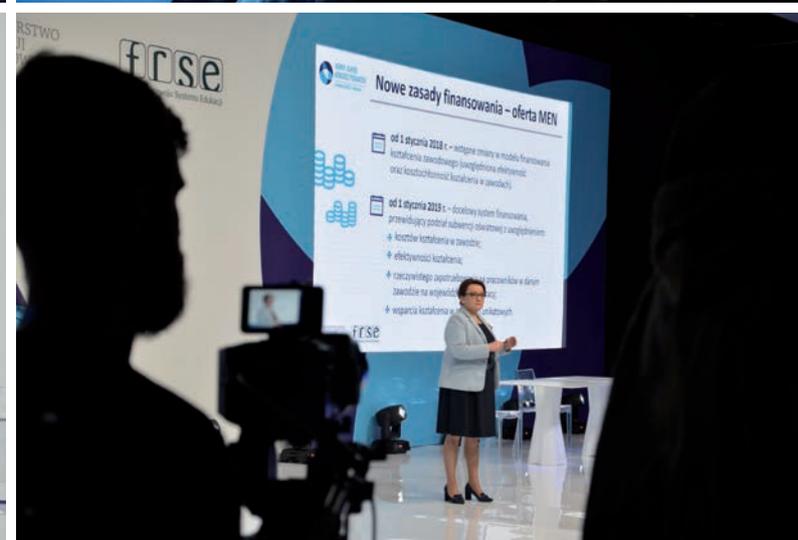
– vocational education reform

Changes in professional and technical education planned for the 2019/2020 school year, the new solutions in the Educational Information System, presentation of good practices in cooperation between self-governments, companies and schools, and programs supporting vocational education offered by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System – these were the main subjects discussed during the “Good Job” Congress of Counties in Wrocław.

Organized by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with the Foundation for the Development of the Education System, the event was attended by almost 1,000 people from all over Poland. The ministry was represented by Minister **Anna Zalewska** and Deputy Minister **Marzena Machałek**. The guests invited to the congress in Wrocław included representatives of ministries, provincial and county authorities,

State Treasury companies, as well as school superintendents, MPs, directors of ministerial departments and entities controlled by the Ministry of National Education, teachers and students of vocational schools.

The Ministry of National Education has made changes to the vocational education system in order to better prepare teenagers and adults to work in their professions. The overarching aim has been to adapt vocational education to the needs of the modern economy. It will be achieved by increasing the involvement of companies and professional organizations in vocational and technical education. An important aspect of the reform concerns the updating of curricula as well as organizational and legal changes intended to improve the quality and efficiency of vocational education and to promote this form of learning among students and their parents.



During her speech Minister Anna Zalewska emphasized that despite economic growth and large financial outlays on vocational education (over PLN 9 billion per year), around 60% of large and medium-sized companies in Poland have problems finding employees with the right qualifications. She said that rebuilding vocational education is one of the key aims of the Sustainable Development Strategy, which is intended to positively affect the climate for investing in the region, increase the involvement in CSR and secure the availability of skilled workers.

The minister explained that in order to develop vocational and technical education it is necessary to introduce a complex network of careers advisors at all stages of education. A Poland-wide platform will be developed to connect careers advisors, students, teachers and employers.

Minister Zalewska signed an agreement with the Union of Railway Industry Employers. Letters of intent concerning cooperation on vocational and technical education were signed with PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A. and TAURON Polska Energia S.A.



On behalf of employers, the agreement and letters of intent were signed by **Marek Chraniuk**, Deputy President of the Union of Railway Industry Employers and President of PKP Intercity S.A.; **Ryszard Wasilek**, Deputy President of PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A.; and **Filip Grzegorzczuk**, President of the Board of TAURON Polska Energia S.A. ■



Education under employers' supervision

The Wałbrzych Coking Plant “Victoria” has created four company-sponsored classes teaching the students to work as mechanical technician, mechatronics specialist, electrician and chemical technologist. The classes will function under the “INVEST in EDU” Educational Cluster, which was set up by the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone. The ceremony of signing the agreement was attended by Anna Zalewska, Minister of National Education, and representatives of the commune of Wałbrzych and the County Office.

“Employers know that they will be unable to secure their future without vocational and technical education. This is why

they want to support schools in terms of logistics, organization and funding. It is the most efficient way of training future specialists,” said Minister Zalewska. “Professional and technical schools should become schools of first choice, and our role as adults is to convince young people to think in this way.”

The company-sponsored classes will be established in the Maksymilian Tytus Huber School Complex no. 5 in Wałbrzych (mechanical technician, mechatronics specialist), the Energetyk Complex of Technical Schools (electrician) and the Maria Skłodowska-Curie School Complex in Szczawno Zdrój (chemical technologist). Under the cooperation program, the



“Victoria” coking plant will provide apprenticeships and extra training for students as well as school equipment. The best students can count on attractive scholarships.

“We are one of the biggest employers in the region. Entire families work for us,” says **Katarzyna Dawidczyk**, president of the coking plant. “However, a gap between generations is beginning to pose a problem. The average employee’s age in our plant is 38 years. Since we cannot find the specialists we need on the market, we have decided to join the cluster and together look for schools that will train specialists in the professions we need.”

It is worth noting that so far eleven company-sponsored classes have been established under the INVEST in EDU cluster. Its main aim is to monitor the market and predict the demand for concrete skills and qualifications, promote technical and vocational education and connect school with employers.

“We are open to various initiatives because we would like to improve cooperation between schools and companies. This is a crucial requirement for our country to develop,” said **Maciej Badora**, President of the Wałbrzych zone. “I believe young people will guarantee that Poland will be among the leading industrial countries.”

The cluster run by the WSEZ currently gathers over 100 entities: companies, secondary and higher schools of vocational education, business support institutions and self-governmental units. The cluster functions under the honorary patronage of the Ministry of National Education. ■





BYSTRZYCA KŁODZKA



RENATA SURMA
Mayor of Bystrzyca Kłodzka

Dear Readers,

I am very pleased to encourage you to locate the seat of your company in the Bystrzyca subzone of the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK". An almost ten-hectare plot in an attractive location can serve your investment or production needs right away.

Over ten years ago our self-government took actions intended to mark off an area in which economic entities would find the best conditions for their activity. This is how the idea to create an economic subzone emerged. Now, with a tremendous amount of financial and material effort, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under Activity 1.3 – Development of Entrepreneurship in the 2014–2020 Regional Operational Program for Dolnośląskie Province, we have succeeded in preparing such an area. It offers access to all utilities – electricity, gas, sewage system – and has a separate access way. It is situated in the southern part of Bystrzyca Kłodzka, near the Warsaw-Prague-Vienna international traffic route and a county road leading to many attractive tourist destinations. The subzone is in close proximity to the Wrocław-Międzylesie railroad, the Bystrzyca Kłodzka-Przedmieście railway redistribution station, and a field airport that could soon be used by aviators.

The Bystrzyca subzone of the WSEZ "INVEST-PARK" is addressed to all economic entities conducting light industrial activity. It offers the possibility of stable production or service provision using the local human potential and natural resources. It fits in with the existing social and material conditions. Employees of companies that will decide to situate their operations in Bystrzyca Kłodzka can expect easy access to a wide range of commercial and service outlets as well as a rich cultural, educational and sports offer. In a nutshell – the location of the subzone is perfect for finding professional and recreational fulfillment.

This is why I encourage you – investors from different industries – to take an interest in the economic offer of our commune. I believe that business can be successfully done in Bystrzyca, in friendly cooperation with the local self-government.

THE COMMUNE OF BYSTRZYCA KŁODZKA covers an area of 338 km², which makes it the largest one in Kłodzko County and one of the largest in Dolnośląskie Province. The town accounts for 3.23% of the commune's area; apart from it, there are 41 villages. The commune lies in the Central Sudeten, in the southern part of Kłodzko Land, 110 km from Wrocław, the capital of the region. The commune stretches between the Bystrzyckie Mountains in the west and the Śnieżnik Massif in the east. It borders the communes of Szczytna, Lądek Zdrój, Polanica Zdrój, Stronie Śląskie and Międzylesie. The western border of the commune is part of the state border with the Czech Republic. The Warsaw-Prague-Vienna international traffic route (national road no. 33) crosses the commune in close proximity of the Bystrzyca subzone of the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK".





Good start

ECONOMY: Economic development in the commune of Bystrzyca Kłodzka is mostly connected with tourism and industry, including timber and paper industry, agriculture and food processing. The local industry is based on natural resources such as mineral water, timber, rock raw materials (limestone, sandstone, marble). A dominant role is played by timber, which constitutes the basis for the development of sawmills, the match industry, furniture and paper production. In terms of the number of companies, the dominant sector of the local economy is the sector of commerce and services. The most valuable natural deposit in the commune is mineral water, which is exploited on an industrial scale in Szczawina and Gorzanów. Throughout the commune there are also numerous deposits of minerals, ten of which are known for their usefulness in the production of building materials, including limestone and sandstone deposits.

ADVANTAGES OF BYSTRZYCA KŁODZKA: A favorable factor for the development of industry in the commune is the convenient access to traffic routes leading to big cities in Poland and the Czech Republic. The commune lies on an important road connecting south-western Poland with the Czech Republic, Austria and southern European countries. The most important road in the commune is national road no. 33, which links Kłodzko with Bystrzyca Kłodzka, Międzyzlesie and the Boboszów border crossing. There is also a railroad leading to the rail border crossing in Międzyzlesie, 18 km from Bystrzyca. In 2008 part of the CE 59 railroad from Wrocław to Międzyzlesie and the border crossing was modernized. This section belongs to Poland's primary railroad network. It plays a significant role in international rail transit because it is one of the links between the most important European railroads. ■



Halina Mlynkova:

You
can't live
without
dreams!



Halina Mlynkova, a singer and songwriter, talks about success, national identity, patriotism and dreams.

WSSE INFO: Last year we met while celebrating the 20th anniversary of existence of the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK", which accompanied the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój. Your concert added splendor to the jubilee. As it turned out, at more or less the same time you were also celebrating the 20th anniversary – of coming to study in Poland. How does a young artist who has already achieved so much treat her jubilee? Is it an opportunity to sum up the past and set new objectives?

Halina Mlynkova: Twenty years is impressive – it is already a well-prospering company!

I'm currently at the best point of my life. I've already acquired much experience in my profession, but at the same time I have enough energy and opportunities to spread my wings, not only as a singer.

Is it possible to compare artistic success and success in business? It is clear that your private passion eventually reached a professional level and prompted you to set ever more challenging goals. Apart from talent, what traits of character and circumstances determine the ultimate success?

I think that a true professional in business is able to predict the future of the company, at least to some extent. Perhaps it's similar in music, if you approach it from a purely business perspective. But if you look at it through your heart, soul or the artistic value, ignoring the consequences, there are only two possible results – people will find your music appealing or not. There is no third way. So to a large extent success is determined by chance. Sometimes a well-planned strategy is not enough in music because there are too many factors, including the human one. Everybody can release an album nowadays, but few among them will be successful. However, once you've achieved success, the road is the same as in business – responsibility, professionalism, hard work, good planning.

You are a Pole who was born and raised in Zaolzie, a part of Silesia belonging to the Czech Republic where around 40 thousand Polish people live. They



are known for their vivid interest in the Polish culture. This is a region where some of the best Polish-language schools outside Poland are located. How does a Polish woman who lives and works in Poland and the Czech Republic perceive her artistic identity? Does multicultural richness contribute to artistic practice by providing the foundation or inspiration for new projects?

Being born in Zaolzie was the best thing that could happen to me. Living in three cultures – the Polish, Czech, and the one closest to me, the culture and dialect of Zaolzie – is like living three lives.

Many successful people come from this region, and their success must have been influenced by their upbringing – respect for tradition, cultivating the local culture and national identity. These factors provide a sense of belonging, which in turn leads to self-confidence and being able to spread your wings.

You are right in saying that the level of education is very high. It results from the fact that the teachers working in Polish schools in Zaolzie go to great lengths to make sure that their students will do well in life. Caring about the students' needs and knowledge provides them with the right foundation. My memories from primary school are as good as they could be.

You are known not only for your great hits recognizable by millions of fans, but also for your involvement in patriotic events. You don't just sing patriotic songs – you write them, too. This year marks the centenary of regaining independence by Poland. As history teaches us, it happened thanks to the ulti-

mate sacrifice of generations of brave Poles. Do you, and other Poles living today in Zaolzie, associate patriotism with a longing? How should patriotism manifest itself nowadays?

I don't think there is a longing for Poland in the inhabitants of Zaolzie, because they have not come to a foreign land – they have always been there. They are at home. It was the border that shifted.

I feel deep respect for our ancestors who spilled their blood for our freedom. Thanks to them, our generation has not experienced war. We are a fortunate generation, and this is why patriotism should matter to us a great deal. Today, however, it shouldn't mean fighting, but building.

Difficult moments in history have always united Poles, which shows that we are a nation of patriots. The way I see it, teaching history, national culture, folk culture, tradition, good manners, mutual respect – this is the foundation for patriotism. Tradition and knowledge of history shapes us as a nation aware of itself, which is what us Europeans need nowadays.

Does Halina Mlynkova ever dream? What makes you smile? Does everyday life provide enough inspiration for you as an artist? How to reconcile all these

strong artistic emotions, sensitivity to music and the written word, with everyday life?

You can't live without dreams! Dreams fuel every day. Everybody dreams, and I do it all the time. I'll still be dreaming on my death bed – perhaps of paradise.

Life is the greatest gift. I'm inspired by the path I've chosen – by successes, failures, my family, journeys, the world around me. Just look around – the world can be a wonderful source of inspiration. Everyday life brings new challenges, new people, new experiences. No two days of my life are identical. Sometimes I draw inspira-

tion from somebody's casual remark, and sometimes even the best painting or film leaves me indifferent. Inspiration comes uninvited – sometimes when I'm alone or at night. I look at the world through rose-tinted glasses. I never get out of bed on the wrong side, because I have no reason to do so. So you could say that for me life is the greatest inspiration of all. ■



Automotive



B2B



Almost 400 people took part in the next edition of Automotive CEE Day, a meeting of suppliers and buyers wishing to establish partnerships. The attendees represented 240 companies from nine countries. The Wałbrzych zone, in which the automotive industry is the dominant sector, was a co-organizer of the event held at the Exhibition and Congress Center in Opole.

Organized by AutomotiveSuppliers.com, Automotive CEE Day is among the most important B2B meetings in Central and Eastern Europe. As the attendees in the previous edi-

tions stressed, what makes this event special is the unique interactive platform that enables company representatives to arrange meetings. As a result, the participants individually choose the potential partners and build their customized schedules of talks.

This year's edition was special because a record number of companies and their representatives arranged over 1,110 B2B meetings – the largest number in the history of Automotive CEE Day. Moreover, the event was accompanied by an exhibition featuring over 50 firms and institutions.



“What pleases us as organizers is the fact that year by year Automotive CEE Day attracts a bigger number of companies from Poland and abroad,” said Małgorzata **Zborowska-Stęplewska**, Partner at AutomotiveSuppliers.com. “The event provides the perfect venue for establishing new contacts that can evolve into long-term cooperation between the individual companies.”

This opinion is confirmed by the attendees.

“The event is growing bigger – this year’s edition has attracted many participants, which provides an opportunity for more talks. Sometimes it is difficult to reach potential clients by phone, and here it is possible to talk with them directly, including companies whose doors are normally sealed tight. Another advantage is the possibility of fol-





lowing the changes in the automotive market,” said **Anna Gibas** of Geo Globe Polska, a company specializing in plastics thermoforming.

“The venue for the event is very convenient. Most automotive firms are based in southern Poland, so Opole is the right choice, with ample accommodation facilities. This has been our second visit, and I think that we will return next year too.



Meetings like these are much needed. I represent the procurement department. We have come to Automotive CEE Day because we only participate in B2B meetings,” stressed **Marta Gaworcza**k, head of Sitek’s procurement department. “We have had many meetings this year, the schedule was very tight. Perhaps next year we will split into two teams to be able to take part in even more meetings.”

“We have come for the first time and I already see the benefits of our visit. You can easily find companies that could become partners in the future,” said **Michał Kuśmider**, Product Manager at NOVACODE from Bydgoszcz, a manufacturer of labels. “We have had the opportunity to present concrete products to demonstrate the benefits of using our labels. We will definitely take part in Automotive CEE Day 2019. We are very pleased with the talks we’ve had so far.”

“The meeting has given us an excellent opportunity to present our company as a partner for the automotive industry. Taking into account the fact that we will shortly implement new projects, contact with potential suppliers is exactly what we needed at this time,” said **Łukasz Czaplak**, Management Assistant at IAC Polska Sp. z o.o.

Each subsequent edition of Automotive CEE Day is an increasingly important event for suppliers of car parts and services. Its significance is due to the possibility of presenting the offer to a growing number of potential business partners.

“We use the participants’ feedback to modify each edition of Automotive CEE Day in a way that would optimally address their needs and expectations. This year we have organized the Knowledge Zone, which was a specially prepared room where partner companies could showcase their solutions or services and inform about their expansion plans,” said **Rafał Orłowski**, Partner at AutomotiveSuppliers.com. ■



THE TABLE MOUNTAINS



Breathtaking rocks exquisitely sculpted by nature millions of years ago. Owing their name to the characteristically flat summits, the Table Mountains are an excellent destination for hiking with family as well as for climbing enthusiasts.

The highest peak, Szczeliniec Wielki (919 m a.s.l.), can be reached by climbing 665 stone steps. Its steep, almost vertical slopes and the flat top trigger associations with the shape of a table. The range was uplifted 30 million years ago and is one of Europe's few plated mountain formations. It is a fragment of a vast plateau stretching from the Kłodzko Valley in the east, the Czech territory in the north-west, all the way to the Kamienna Góra Valley. On the Polish side, the range is 18 km long and has a width of around 5 km. The Table Mountains National Park, established in 1993, covers an area of 63 km². Its biggest attractions include Szczeliniec Wielki, the labyrinthine Błędne Skały (Errant Rocks) and the Batorów Peat Bog. Over 90% of the park's area is covered by forests. The Table Mountains are also known for mineral water deposits and many spas, including Polanica-Zdrój, Kudowa-Zdrój and Duszniki-Zdrój. ■

photographs by Marcin Jagielicz

