



ECONOMY OF THE REGION

Extensive sectoral structure:

- well-developed food processing and cement and lime industry facilities
- modern, advanced furniture and timber industry
- employment in private sector constitutes 79% of the total employment in industry
- number of businesses in the region totals about 93,000
- number two in Poland in terms of the rate of growth of the number of businesses

REGIONAL ECONOMIC TRENDS:

- increasing average employment rate in industry
- increasing average real gross remuneration
- decreasing unemployment rate
- increasing number of commissioned residential buildings
- increasing number of businesses
- increasing sold construction output
- increasing income from total business

From 1995 to 2005 the number of enterprises in the Opolskie Province increased two-fold and currently reaches 90,000. The majority are micro-enterprises (95.4%) with up to 9 employees. It shows development of entrepreneurship and activity of the inhabitants. Small and medium enterprises are one of the most important elements of the local economy. This sector reacts most quickly and effectively to the changing reality of markets, recognizes and satisfies the needs of customers and serves as the essential competitive challenge for big companies motivating them to change.

Natural resources, particularly the deposits of marls and limestone have a great influence on the economy of the region. Thanks to these mineral resources, the Strzelce-Górażdże region has developed, especially regarding cement-lime sector. The most significant companies are Górażdże Group (owned by HeidelbergCement consortium) and Lhoist Poland. The Opolskie Province is the place, which attracts foreign investors. The coefficient of a number of companies with foreign capital is 4.0 per 10,000 inhabitants, which gives the region a high ranking in Poland.

Within the Opolskie Province, a dozen of branches of industry have been developed and among them there are:

- Food processing
- Fuel-power
- Chemical
- Cement-lime
- Electromechanical
- Metallurgic and metal
- Furniture

The Opolskie province has excellent investment sites (especially along the A4 motorway) - such as the Economic Activity Zone at Olszowa or sites in Ujazd and Krapkowice municipalities. There are also subzones of special economic zones: Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone "Invest-Park" in Nysa, Skarbimierz, Opole, Namysłów, Praszka and Kluczbork and Starachowice Special Economic Zone in Tułowice.

One of the well-prepared investment sites in Poland belongs to the commune of Skarbimierz. It was distinguished during the competition 'Grunt na medal' and is included in the 'golden sixteen' of well-prepared grounds in Poland. In this area, Cadbury Schweppes plans to establish its factory - a €100 million investment project. This chewing gum factory is the greatest investment in the food industry in Poland.



“OPOLSKIE TUTAJ ZOSTAJĘ” (OPOLSKIE - I’M STAYING HERE)

The objective of the programme is to promote employment and professional development opportunities in the region, reducing mass employment migration, raising interest in education, further professional development in our region through promotion of the province’s advantages and education possibilities and encouraging people working abroad to return to the province. The programme’s partners include Opole businesses, entrepreneurs, labour offices, colleges, universities and schools in the region.



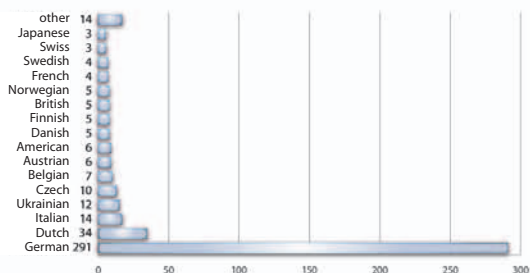
“OPOLSKA MARKA” (OPOLE BRAND)

The objective of the contest, held for five years now, is to support regional entrepreneurship, promote the best products and services and reward those, who, in these very competitive times, win foreign markets. Every year, the local businesses compete in four categories: Product, Service, Enterprise and Export - both in the SME and large enterprises sectors.



„GMINA ATRAKCYJNA DLA INWESTORA” (MUNICIPALITY ATTRACTIVE TO INVESTORS)

The objective of the programme is to support local authorities in creating conditions to attract investments and motivate them to develop attractive investment offers. Employees selected by municipalities have learnt at the workshops how to negotiate successfully and prepare promotional materials, as well as how to assist investors. Afterwards, both their municipalities and they themselves were audited. The managers were assessed in terms of their knowledge and competence, interpersonal skills and management style. The best local governments that during the verification process earned at least 80 points (out of 100), were granted three-star certificates attesting to their “very high level of qualification in domestic and foreign investors winning and assistance skills”. The three-star municipalities included: Namysłów, Kietrz, Kolonowskie, Opole, Gogolin, Zawadzkie, Rudniki, Prószków, Zębowice and Kluczbork.



THE OPOLSKIE PROVINCE IS THE REGION OF BUOYANT LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS IN WHICH FOREIGN BUSINESSES ARE EAGER TO INVEST THEIR CAPITAL.

