

National Support Program for the Meeting Industry

2019-12-18

During the Polish Congress Ambassadors Gala held on October 21 in Katowice, LOT Polish Airlines and the Polish Tourist Organization announced the creation of the National Support Program for the Meeting Industry.

This is another PLL LOT and POT project, which is to promote Poland abroad.

The goal of the program is to provide airline tickets to representatives of the world of science, culture, sport, business and other environments (the so-called Congress Ambassadors) so that they could actively participate in the process of attracting further international business meetings and events to Poland, i.e. conferences, congresses and fairs.

The Support Program for the Meeting Industry operates on the basis of the assumptions of the Polish Congress Ambassadors Program that has been implemented since 1998 jointly by the Polish Tourist Organization and a non-governmental organization - the Conferences and Congresses Association in Poland.

Acquiring events, in particular international congresses, is a complicated and lengthy process, bringing financial benefits to all its participants, including congress facilities, hotels, entrepreneurs offering professional services in the field of event organization, transport companies, host city and airlines. The additional value of this area of the MICE sector is the transfer of knowledge, technology and potentially new investments.

— The meetings industry is the so-called sector of the future, offering high quality services and selling intellectual values. It is one of the most modern sectors of the economy of developed countries. It is estimated that in Poland it increases the income of the national GDP by more than 1 percent, creates hundreds of thousands of jobs and generates billions in turnover. The development of this sector is one of the key promotional priorities of the Polish Tourist Organization, under which the Poland Convention Bureau (PCB) operates. That is why we are glad that our national carrier LOT Polish Airlines will support us - said Robert Andrzejczyk, President of the Polish Tourist Organization.

One of the most important factors determining the choice of destination for the event is the city's transport accessibility (including air connections), along with the availability of high-class congress infrastructure, accommodation facilities and the region's research and scientific specialization. The involvement and support (often financial) of cities and regions, the involvement of the representatives of authorities and the role of the so-called Ambassadors of Congresses who acquire the event together with convention bureaus.

Our country's offer meets the requirements of the organizers to a high degree. Poland's strengths include: its central location in Europe, the constantly expanded network of air connections (thanks to LOT Polish Airlines and Warsaw hubs), a high level of security, price and infrastructure availability as well as support provided by 11 Polish convention bureaus specialized in the MICE area.

The Meeting Industry Support Program, operated by PLL LOT, is addressed to the most active



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Congress Ambassadors and representatives of cities and regions. The airline tickets that they can apply for will enable them to reach decision-makers, i.e. owners of international events, with the Polish congress offer.

— We will transport 10 million passengers in 2019 on Polish Airlines, a leader among traditional carriers of Central and Eastern Europe, and we will transport about 25 million passengers a year in the perspective of opening the Central Communication Port. LOT offers excellent connections to large Polish cities - potential hosts of fairs and congresses, from over 100 largest cities throughout Europe and leading non-European capitals. Our advantages include a well-designed network of connections, a new fleet and convenient hours of flight operations. LOT will develop the offer for the MICE sector. We intend to increase our share in this market and together with the Polish Tourist Organization support the promotion of Poland among event organizers, among others thanks to such initiatives as the Support Program - added Michał Fijoł, board member for commercial matters of LOT Polish Airlines.

Recently, cooperation and synergy of activities conducted by regional and municipal convention offices, local ambassadors and the meetings industry as well as local and government support have allowed, among others, for the acquisition of the WADA World Anti-Doping Conference 2019 in Katowice (it is estimated that about two thousand representatives of all communities involved in the fight against doping in sport will participate in the event). This year in Wrocław, the largest annual meeting of political scientists and sociologists in Europe - European Consortium for Political Research 2019, was also held, attended by over two thousand scientists from around the world. Next year, Poznań will host the International Congress of Historical Sciences (ICHS) 2020 during which we expect over two thousand historians from around the world to attend.