



***European Congress of Local Governments, 2nd Edition***  
**"Local Government Today – People, Cooperation, Innovations"**  
**5-6 April 2016, Cracow**

The second edition of the European Congress of Local Governments (ECLG) took place in Krakow, 5 – 6 April 2016. The event, organised by the Institute for Eastern Studies (IES) in Warsaw and its partners, took place at the International Conference Centre in Krakow and was attended by more than 1500 delegates from different regions of Europe. The agenda of the event included subjects relevant for the regions and local governments, structured according to different themes (economy, finances, environment, and regional cooperation, among others) in the form of plenary sessions and debates.

The European Institute of Romania was IES's partner in organising a debate during the ECLG entitled: ***How to Attract Key Investments to the Region?*** The event was moderated by *Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan*, Director General of EIR and it took place on the second day of the congress (6 April).

The key points of the guests' speeches:

***Emil Boc, Mayor of Cluj-Napoca (Romania), former Prime Minister of the Government of Romania***

Mr. Boc presented the city of Cluj-Napoca and its metropolitan area as the "heart of Transylvania". Cluj was the *European Youth Capital* in 2015 and it is a *contestant in the final session of the competition for the European Capital of Culture* in 2021. The city hosts 11 universities, 4 of which are in the top 12 of universities in Romania, as well as 15 research institutes. Cluj is also the European capital of clusters, with 7 clusters active in IT, energy, agriculture, furniture and life-style, while being considered the national growth center for the IT field. The attraction of investments is also increased by the way the region is presented in the international reports: Eurostat Report 2014 – "Europe's friendliest city"; European City Report places Cluj-Napoca in the top 10 of cities where the quality of life is at a high standard; New York Times defines Cluj as being a "hub of art" and Trip Advisor recommends the region and the city of Cluj-Napoca as the best tourist destination in Romania. Consequently, all these appreciations lead to an increase in investors' trust, facilitating thus the development of projects and investments, as proved by the existing investments: Bosch, Siemens, Emerson, Bombardier, De'Longhi, Genpact, Steelcase, NTT Data, and Office Depot. In order to attract investors, Cluj-Napoca is in a continuous process of infrastructure development (airport, motorways, ring-roads, public roads etc.) and e-governing is used for modernizing public administration. "Cluj Innovation City" is the major project for the next 15 years. A EUR 535 million investment, on a 200 ha area, the project is focused on research and development and will offer around 20,000 jobs.

***Marek Sowa, Member of Parliament, Poland, former Marshal of the Malopolska Region***

In attracting investments, it is important to concentrate on developing conditions of attractiveness for investors; and cooperation with university centers, genuine centers of out-searching, given the fact that many companies recruit their future employees among students. Strategic investments have set off modernization works at the Krakow airport (the largest investment in the region). The advantages of the Malopolska region are generated by the unconditional support of the academic environment, the well-developed tourism infrastructure, and the way the investments from public funds were prioritized. All of these must be reflected really and transparently in reports and specialized publications, which increases the attractiveness for strategic investors.



***Witold Stepien, Marshal of Lodz Region, Poland***

Lodz region developed constantly and the city of Lodz is one of the most important transit centers in this part of the continent, connecting Warsaw to Western Europe, as well as the Baltic maritime ports to the one in the South. Key points for attracting investments are a good transport infrastructure, very young human resources, preferential taxes for investors, industrial clusters, tourism and leisure activities, education infrastructure (research centers) etc.

***Ruslan Martsinkiv, Mayor, Ivano-Frankivsk City Council, Ucraina***

The city has around 3,300 entrepreneurs, including the approx. 120 enterprises (of which large enterprises 0.1%, medium-size 3.6% and small 96%). Ivano-Frankivsk offers investment opportunities for partners from approx. 48 countries. At present, the total volume of foreign investments is of \$ 465 million, of which \$ 441 million from EU (95% of the total capital). Industrial enterprises are considered to be very attractive for foreign investors, which is very important for the economic development of the city. At the beginning of 2016 the capital of these investments was of approx. \$ 330 million.

In order to attract investments in the priority sectors of the economy, modernizing enterprises and creating a modern industrial and transport infrastructure, a development zone based on industrial investments was established in Ivano-Frankivsk on an area of approx. 612 ha. The participation of the municipality in the implementation of programs and projects with EU or international financing (such as the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine and the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme) is particularly important.

***Anders Wangby, Director, Västerbotten Investments Agency (VIA), Sweden***

There is no single answer to this question, said Mr. Wangby. The representatives of the local authorities have to trust the business environment, to be aware of the specific needs of the regions they represent and of the resources at their disposal in order to implement major investment projects, to stimulate the investors' interest for the region by presenting through reports real and concrete data regarding the local economy and the opportunities it offers.

In conclusion, attracting companies to invest in various regions requires a local involvement from authorities as well as citizens.

**The panel was organized in cooperation with the**



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