

VERDE Cluster and the Lodzkie region

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Who we are?

- Set up in **2011** in Lodz using EU funds
- Verde **Foundation** for Sport Innovations is managing the **Cluster** of the same name
- **Until 2019** – Cluster & Foundation for Innovative Sport and Recreational Surfaces,
- sector-specific organization of **SMEs** and **institutes** located mainly in the Lodzkie region
- Currently **15 members** (i.e. DYWILAN (the woven grass producer), Greiner Multifoam (the sport shockpad producer), Sportex (the distributor of sport equipment), Cedrus (a local installer of sport and recreational surfaces) and Moratex (a R&D institute))
- c.a. **20 stakeholders** (also Tech. University, Regional Council, City of Lodz)
- 3 staff members + 3 occasional


What we do?


- The **only** regional organisation that represents sports sector towards policy makers
- Historically the cluster supported its members in **testing equipment, networking activities and promoting business** (i.e. sharing the testing equipment owned by the VERDE foundation to pre-test the final sports products that they are to certify at i.e. FIFA laboratories)
- 2015-2018: **standstill** due to lack of funding
- **Second life** - since 2018, thanks to **international cooperation** we operate more broadly, with the q-helix stakeholders
- **Active participation in interregional (EU) projects**: PP in Inno4Sports, Erasmus +, EPSI
- VERDE promotes interregional cooperation, works on linking the cluster members to share knowledge and experience, develops a common strategy, creates and implements initiatives that adapt good practices from other EU regions


Lodzkie Region – in the centre of Poland, in the centre of Europe




 Population
2.5 million people
(including 63.4% in cities)


 Population density
138 persons/km²


 Active professionally
1.5 million people


 Unemployment rate (as of February 2017)
8,7%


 Surface
18.219 km²


 Capital city
Łódź


 Districts
24


 Number of municipalities
177

 Cities with district rights
Łódź, Piotrków Trybunalski, Skierniewice

 The biggest cities of the region
Bełchatów, Kutno, Pabianice, Piotrków Trybunalski, Radomsko, Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Zgierz

 GDP per capita for 2014 approx.
PLN 43 thousand, approx. EUR 10 thousand.

 Number of economic entities (2015)
240 thousand

 Average gross salary (February 2017)
approx. PLN 3.8 thousand,
approx. EUR 890

Lodz – capital of the region

700 thousand inhabitants – PL's 3rd largest city

Industrial heritage: textile industry

„Manchester of the east”

Łagiewniki forest – one of the largest forest located within city limits in Europe (area of more than 1,200 ha (2,965 ac)).

Arturówek lake



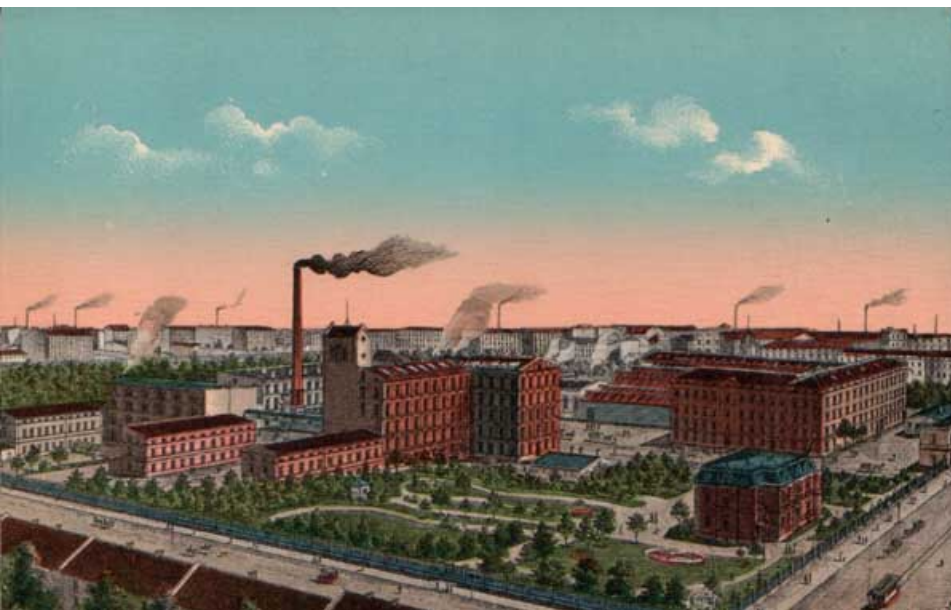
ca 40 parks within city limits (the oldest one is Źródlińska park founded in 1840; awarded as the most beautiful park in Poland in a competition organized by an American gardening company)
one of the biggest water parks in Poland – the “Fala” Aquapark

Atlas Arena of 2009 – one of the largest and most modern sports halls in Poland with more than 13 thousands seats in the auditorium

2 football clubs, former Champions of Poland: Widzew (ca 17 thousand spectators per game, Poland's top 3 each weekend) and ŁKS

Running events - marathon, Piotrkowska run

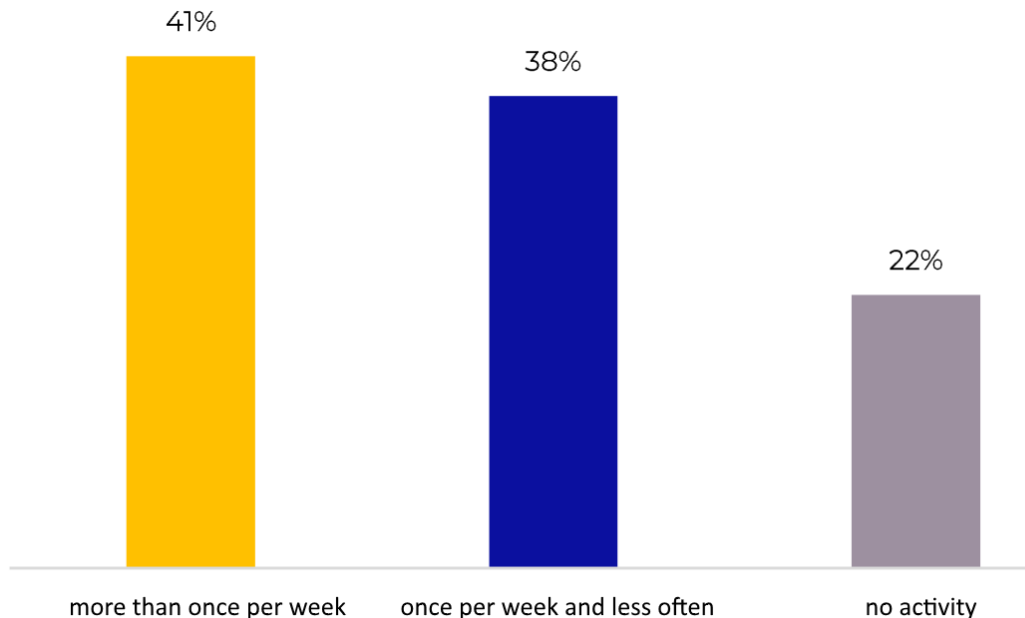
International sports events – volleyball Euro championship, U21 football WC...



Socio-economic value of clusters: upcoming societal trends and real consumer needs

Upcoming societal change: amateur sport is booming

How often do you uptake physical activity? (Multisport Index)



Key trends:

2011-2018: increase by 30%

58% participation among 60+

Most popular: jogging, nordic walking and cycling

...But also growing popularity of niche sports

Also: eagerness to pay for sports

Importance of membership cards
(c.a. 1,5 M active cards – 2019)

Challenges

- **Cross-sectoral** nature of sport & vitality
- Sport **not considered as a driver** of local / regional development & innovation
- **Lack of a proper communication & consultation** platform among stakeholders (mostly public-private)
- **Top-down policy** making approach
- weakness of organizations that represent industry, business and civil society within sports & vitality sector as a result of unstable financial conditions
- Poor cluster **funding** (2015-2018 experience)

Thank you!

Questions welcome