

An interview with Mrs. Urszula Potęg, President of the International Fairs - Poland Miedzynarodowych Targów Polska,

How to conquer a tourist market of 40 million

*The thirteenth International Tourism Trade Fair Travel Show
TT Warsaw Tour & Travel 2005: 22- 24 September in Warsaw,*



An interview with Mrs. Urszula Potęga, President of the International Fairs - Poland Miedzynarodowych Targów Polska, who is the organizer of the largest exhibition event in Central Eastern Europe - the International Tourism Trade Fair Travel Show TT Warsaw Tour & Travel.

We have the 13th TT Warsaw Trade Fair coming up shortly. Perhaps you can tell me what you owe your success to?

TT Warsaw is one of the largest and most popular events in the tourist sector in Central Eastern Europe, and it's no wonder; Poland is a large market of over 40 million, with great potential. Many factors make up its success. One of the most important, in my opinion, is the ideal atmosphere of the Fair, which the participants, exhibitions and venue create. Our Fairs are not held in stereotypical halls with no atmosphere at all, but in an original venue, at the Palace of Culture and Science. Its beautiful monumental halls, large chandeliers, pillars and marble, combined with colourful stands reflecting the beauty of the various corners of the world, create a unique atmosphere. In addition it's an ideal location. The Fair is organized in the capital of Poland - Warsaw, in the very centre of

our country and of Europe. Communications to the event are excellent and this means visitors from all over Poland and all over the world have no problem in getting there. I think that this is one of the reasons why the TT Warsaw fair is privileged, having the largest number of national stands of all Polish exhibitions. In addition, we ensure that our Fairs are as attractive as possible not only as to the products on offer. I know that there is a large demand from professionals for events with an educational aspect. That is why we have arranged a rich program of seminars, conferences and presentations. From a professional aspect, our event is supported by the Polish Tourism Organisation, the Polish Chamber of Tourism Chamber and the Polish Tourism Development Agency Agency for the Development of Tourism, and the Ministry for the of Economy and Labour is patron. The high ranking of the event is also borne out by the fact that it takes place under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski. The media is also promoting the Fair, and I am pleased to say, a lot is appearing in the media concerning TT Warsaw.

- Who will we be able to meet at the TT Warsaw Fair?

As I've already mentioned, countless national representatives will be presenting their own national tourism. Last year, 38 officially represented countries from all corners of the world competed for clients. They will be launching on the market attractive tourist regions from all over Poland and other European countries and cities. Tour opera-

tors and travel agencies will also be presenting these products. The products on offer at the Fair will be complemented by hotels and other facilities for tourists, carriers, insurance companies and web sites. The trade fair will first be open exclusively for trade visitors and then to the general public. For the first two days, the event is only for professionals from the sector. It is a meeting place for managers, traders, government representatives of organizations promoting tourism, travel agents, hotels associations and organizers of tourism for business purposes and other important institutions and organizations in the sector. Because the Fair will be closed to the general public for the first two days, professionals will be able to share experiences, devote time to business contacts, and compare offers with colleagues in the sector. On the third day, clients interested in tourism products will fill the Palace of Culture and Science, looking for interesting ideas for their holidays, and new destinations.

-What influence has accession to the European Union had on the TT Warsaw Fair?

Opening the borders has made travel simpler. The Polish market is a lucrative market for European tourism firms, particularly as Poles are eager to go abroad on holiday. In January and February 2005, a significant increase of over 14% was noted in the number of foreigners coming to Poland. The improved economy, due to Poland's accession to the EU, has obviously influenced the TT Warsaw Fair. Last year, we noted that, amongst trade visitors, the percentage of foreigners increased markedly.



- How is the current Fair different from that 12 years ago?

TT Warsaw changes from year to year. We try to ensure that the Fair meets the needs of all clients. Each year after the Fair has ended, we try to include all exhibitor, visitor and media suggestions, when organizing the next Fair. The current Fair has excellent support as regards the professional aspect. Furthermore, the TT Warsaw Fair was considerably smaller twelve years ago, and was held in smaller premises - in the Torwar in Warsaw. After two years, it became too over-crowded there, so we moved to the Palace of Culture and Science. There is also a fundamental difference between today's exhibitions, particularly by the Polish exhibitors, and those in the first Fairs. Today, each stand is professional, precise, and planned to the very last detail, including professional comprehensive promotional material, and also evokes an excellent atmosphere of the various places the exhibitor is inviting us to visit.

have been taking part for years, and also that each year new exhibitors join us. My wish for the future is that, in a few years time, the Fair will expand to utilise all the floors of the Palace of Culture and Science and resound with music from the various countries. In the meantime, I invite you all to take part in our next event, which will be taking place in September.

Out of all the tourism fairs in Poland, TT Warsaw is the one most frequently visited. Last year, almost 40,000 people visited the Fair, out of which 9,000 were representatives of the tourism sector. We asked Adam Zych, traveller, correspondent/journalist



lar with domestic and foreign tour operators, travel agencies, holiday resorts, hotels, boarding houses, and carriers. There are always new-comers, and in recent years, more and more web sites, internet services and insurance companies have been a noticeable feature. In the very centre of Warsaw you can see not only domestic and European exhibitors, but also exhibitors from far-off countries, of which we know little: India, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand and the South African Republic. Many of them have been here on several occasions, and others who have discovered a new tourist market and are here for the first time. Each year, there is a "partner country" at the Fair, and during the events there are many seminars, workshops and conferences. For journalists, it is a good opportunity to learn about something of which we know little; sharing experiences with our colleagues in the tourism sector and discussions on travel with colleagues in the profession. In a nutshell, people from all over the world meet during this weekend in the centre of Warsaw to talk about their experiences and journeys, not just within the narrow sphere of travellers, but also in the hope that it rubs off on visitors to the Fair. They can, therefore, obtain first hand information on places none of them would visit, but for the TT Warsaw Fair.



- Miedzynarodowe Targi Polska International Fairs - Poland - the company of which you are president - organizes many exhibitions. What significance does the TT Warsaw Fair have for you personally?

I derive much pleasure and satisfaction from the TT Warsaw Trade Fair. Even though the Fair has now become a fixture in the calendar of tourism exhibitions, we have not stopped there and continue to strive to present it in a fuller and more interesting way. I am pleased that many exhibitors

from the prestigious newspaper "Gazeta Prawna" why he visits the TT Warsaw Trade Fair.

Adam Zych: The International Tourism Trade FairTravel Show TT Warsaw, Tour & Travel, provides a good opportunity to sum up the tourist season that has just ended and at the same time present a new winter offer - skiing, and leisure holidays. This has always proved very popular in the tourism sector. National tourism organizations and cities and regions from all over Europe present their products. In addition, the Fair is very popu-

Statistics of TT Warsaw 2004
51 - countries represented
38 - national stands
467 - exhibitors
39.780 - visitors
8985 - trade visitors

