

ELBLĄG. Values, potential, benefits

Elbląg, a city of some 120,000 inhabitants, located in the northern part of Poland, is one of the oldest Polish cities that last year celebrated its 780th anniversary of foundation.

Today's Elbląg is certainly a very interesting and modern city that is well worth visiting due to its many advantages: rich history, interesting tourist routes, proximity to many cultural attractions, excellent transport links and good conditions for investing and doing business. It is a rapidly developing city and a modern industrial, academic and cultural center. It is also a great place to live and a great base for tourists.

Great transport route

The city of Elbląg, situated on the crossings of land and water routes, is distinguished by its advantageous communication system. It is an important international transport hub on the East-West route, connecting part of the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad District) with Poland and Western Europe (route S22 connecting Berlin with Kaliningrad and further to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland). The S7 expressway that connects cities such as: Gdańsk, Warsaw, Krakow and Budapest, also runs through Elbląg.

In the region there are also two international airports: the Gdańsk-Rębiechowo airport about 60 km from Elbląg and about 100 km away - Olsztyn-Szymany airport.

City open to the sea

The maritime traditions of Elbląg reach into the farthest part of the city. Today, the reactivated port of Elbląg plays an important role in the city development.

Elbląg is the only Seaport in the north-east of Poland, operating cargo, tourist and passenger shipping. The proximity of the ports in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Kaliningrad and the Scandinavian countries creates opportunities for comprehensive cooperation in the Baltic Sea region.

A great opportunity for elicitation of the port in Elbląg is the project of construction of a waterway through the Vistula Spit. The investment is scheduled to be commenced in 2018. The new waterway will allow free and all-year sailing of seagoing vessels of all flags to the port of Elbląg and other ports of the Vistula Lagoon, which are ports of the European Union. The project will enable the opening of the port in Elbląg for large seagoing vessels, and thus the creation of the fifth large Polish port on the Baltic Sea.

Top city in the region

Thanks to its location, Elbląg takes an active part in many international projects. One of the most important is participation in numerous national and international associations, including inter alia the Union of Baltic Cities, the Euroregion Baltic Association and Hanza, which bring together most countries around the Baltic Sea. The city has 16 partner towns with whom has long-term cooperation relationships.

The city has won several prestigious awards in recent years, including the Fair Play Commune, the Green Cup of Warmia and Mazury District, the Leader of Polish Ecology, the the Master Commune.

There are three universities and well-developed secondary and vocational education in Elbląg. The city cooperates with local business and academia in the field of creating qualified staff, through, inter alia, the apprenticeships system and creation of professional classes that answer the market needs.

City of business opportunities

The city focuses on innovation and the development of new technologies. It implements investments by adapting the infrastructure to the needs of its residents and investors. In the last decade, the quality of life in Elbląg and running a business significantly increased, thanks to among others: development of fiber optic networks, modernization of road infrastructure, introduction of a modern waste utilization and water treatment system, as well as development of investment areas (making investment areas available for the purposes of industrial, production and service) and also development of innovation centres.

Large corporations and brands of well-known producers are located in Elbląg, including General Electric, Grupa Żywiec, Stokota, Siemens, FLSmidth Maag Gear, Wójcik Fabryka Mebli.

In 2011 the Elbląg Technological Park (EPT) was established in the areas of Modrzewina South district (special investment areas of the city). Currently, about 60 companies operate in the Park and Modrzewina South. In an environment of partnership cooperation between local government, science and business, in a building of the Business, Development and Innovation Centre EPT offers approximately 3,000 sq m of office and service space to various companies that are looking for inspiration for innovative solutions. The Park also provides services in the field of advanced laboratory tests.

Currently, many innovative companies operate on the Elbląg market. The city enables and helps new entities to start or continue their business plans. Within the Municipal Office operates the Entrepreneurship Support Office that provides comprehensive services for investors at every stage of investment implementation and also gives further assistance during the functioning of the business. The office cooperates with regional and national investment agencies. It co-organizes and supports events aimed at establishing relations between local entrepreneurs and their counterparts from Scandinavia, Russia and Western Europe.

Discounts and privileges for investors

For investors wishing to take advantage of special privileges, the city prepared attractive areas located in the Warmia-Mazury Special Economic Zone. All locations have access to electricity, water supply and sewage system, and the whole area is well-prepared for production and service activities, including the high technology industry.

The main benefit for entrepreneurs resulting from operating within the limits of a special economic zone is exemption from income tax. In Elbląg, it is 50, 60 or 70% depending on the size of a company.

The city also guarantees local tax exemption for investors who will create new jobs. Depending on the number of employed employees, the investors may receive a land and real estate tax exemption for a period of 3 to 6 years.

A treasury of monuments

Elbląg is one of the best archaeologically tested cities in Europe. The city is constantly carrying out archaeological researches, which systematically bring new discoveries and provide interesting exhibits.

The heart of Elbląg is the old town, where a lot of surprises await for visitors. The Old Town is actually young. In addition to the preserved monuments, most of the inhabited tenement houses are the effect of reconstruction that have been carried out since the 1980s. Retroversion has become the key successful factor in rebuilding the city's old town. New tenement houses are built on the outlines of the foundations of former tenement houses and refer to their shapes. New-old tenements restore the special atmosphere of the old town and create a beautiful background for surviving and wonderfully restored architectural monuments.

Interesting tourist attractions

In Elbląg, not only beautiful tenement houses await tourists, but also impressive medieval monuments: the Market Gate, the Galeria EL Art Center, which operates in the former post-Dominican church, the Elbląg Library, the Archeological and Historical Museum, or the Cathedral of St. Nicholas with the highest church tower on the right side of the Vistula.

In the heart of the Old Town, the Elbląg Canal has its origin - a world-class monument of hydrotechnical art. It is the only waterway still operating in the world with a system of slipways and sluices, where ships "sail" on the grass, crossing the water levels on special platforms.

Elbląg boasts a very wide offer of sports and recreation. Residents and guests have the opportunity to use, among others, the following generally available sports facilities: ice rink, skating and roller skating track, modern swimming pools, multi-functional sports complexes, a canoe and sailing marina and a sports airport.

The Bażantarnia Forest Park also gives city residents and tourists great sports and recreation opportunities. The park is often associated with the mountain area due to its terrain and richness of fauna and flora. The picturesque trails and paths created there provide opportunities for active recreation and sports (running, Nordic walking, orienteering). Bażantarnia is located on the edge of an extremely beautiful land - Elbląg Upland. Forests, mighty hills and deep ravines make this area absolutely unique.

The Green Velo trail, which is the most beautiful cycling route in Poland, also begins in Elbląg. The 2,000 km long route allows to visit the most interesting places in the eastern part of the country.

After a day-long tour of Elbląg and the surrounding area, the city offers an exciting mix of art and entertainment. In the Old Town Hall located in the Old Town, you can watch temporary art exhibitions or take part in concerts of the Elbląg Chamber Orchestra - one of the most dynamically developing orchestras in Poland.

Cooperation within the framework of the Union of Baltic Cities

Tourist values, city potential, and the benefits of investing capital in the city, make Elbląg an attractive place for both investors and tourists.

Local companies are looking for partners among others from the Baltic Sea Region.

City's cultural institutions are open to cooperation with similar institutions from member cities of the UBC. The city is interested in organizing joint projects/events in the field of education and sport.

The city of Elbląg is open to exchange of experiences in the field of: entrepreneurship (including assistance for SMEs, extending cooperation between SMEs), environmental protection (including solving problems resulting from economic development of the BSR and environmental protection of the Baltic Sea, ecological education for children and youth), city security (including crisis management), as well as building a civil society and also initiatives for young people.

City's website - www.elblag.eu

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