



MASURIA

**The Land of Great Lakes
and great opportunities**
– find a place for yourself here

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The Great Masurian Lakes 2020 Association was established in 2015 out of a belief we can achieve “more together”. By joining forces of local government units located around the Great Masurian Lakes, goals noticeable on a regional scale have been achieved. Our mission and task is to provide reasonable support to the development of Masurian communes. On the one hand, we would like them to meet the global standards, to give full comfort to their inhabitants, entrepreneurs and visitors, and on the other hand, we help protect our nature, landscape and waters. It is the Masurian nature that we – the hosts of the region – consider the eighth wonder of the world.

The Association is comprised by 14 adjacent communes and 3 counties:

Węgorzewo Commune, Pozezdrze Commune, City of Giżycko, Giżycko Commune, Miłki Commune, Ryn Commune, City of Mrągowo, Mrągowo Commune, Sorkwity Commune, Mikołajki Commune, Ruciane-Nida Commune, Pisz Commune, Biała Piska Commune, Orzysz Commune. Counties: Giżycko, Pisz and Mrągowo.

Due to the high potential of the region, the Association is active on several business fronts. We are in the process of implementation of many key projects. They include:

- **modernization of the Great Masurian Lakes Route** – conversion and construction of infrastructure along the waterway, including construction of a new Guzianka II sluice, conversion of canals on the route as well as piers in Giżycko, Mikołajki, Pisz, Ryn, and Ruciane-Nida;

- **Masurian Cycling Loop** – a 300-kilometer-long cycling route around the Great Masurian Lakes, along which 10 observation towers and 18 cyclist service points will be built;
- **“7 Wonders of Masuria” Economic Promotion Project** – promotion of Masuria as a good place for business and a range of actions aimed at entrepreneur networking and construction of business/administration relations;
- **Digital Masuria** – establishment of e-administration solutions in 12 communes, ensuring support from inhabitants and entrepreneurs in the form of an e-service package;
- **educational projects** – education of future cadres through development of key skills in primary and secondary school students.

The investment scale is more than PLN 450 million, of which PLN 316 million is comprised by co-financing from the European funds within the Regional Operational Program of the Warmian-Masurian Province for 2014-2020.

We have taken a range of actions promoting the economy of the Great Masurian Lakes. We organize study visits, economic missions, meetings and conferences for the local business. We have implemented a nationwide campaign under the slogan “Masuria is Business”, encouraging investment in Masuria.



HEALTHILY, ECONOMICALLY AND... TASTILY!

Masuria is a perfect place for investment and business development. Apart from the obvious natural advantages, the region has a developed investor support system as well as the largest extent of public aid in Poland. Another advantage is the geographical location (including the proximity to the Russian border and 9 border crossings with the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation) as well as modernization of the road infrastructure, allowing one to reach Masuria from Gdańsk and Warszawa in slightly more than two hours by car.

Despite the dynamic development of civilization, innovative technologies and globalization, unifying cultural differences to a large degree, every region has a unique character of its own. It is about its identity, resulting from its geographical location and history. The business face of our region is extraordinary – here, the soil from which business grows combines tradition with modernity and development with care about the nature. Unquestionably, the Great Masurian Lakes and the region's agricultural traditions are valuable assets of Masuria

Regional Intelligent Specializations are a support tool dedicated to entrepreneurs who utilize the local potential of Masuria. They entail privileges intended to reward industries fitting in with the natural landscape and drawing from the natural resources of the region.

26 thousand businesses benefit from favorable conditions for growing plants, breeding animals and access to clean lakes. 25 Warmian-Masurian products have been recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as traditional and regional.

The Great Masurian Lakes District



500,000 km²
of water



2600
lakes



111 km
of sailing routes



300 km
of the Masurian Cycling Loop



29 000 ha
forests



11
nature reserves



1/3 of the region's area is covered by water, which is unique on an European scale. Therefore, one of the Regional Intelligent Specializations stimulating the business of Masuria is **Water Economy**. Its components include production of yachts and boats. Market leaders from the industry find customers worldwide, and, while developing, they make decisions about launching their own R&D centres. The unique waterway attracts tourists; approx. 70,000 of them relax on water every day during the season. At least as many benefit from a rich offer ashore.

Apart from Water Economy, **High-Quality Food** is of equal importance. Agricultural traditions, clean air, and convenient natural conditions are advantages encouraging investment of capital in this area. Starting from small food processing plants, agritourist farms and restaurants cultivating the culinary heritage of Warmia and Masuria, to large-scale industry – everyone benefits from the crops of the same land and care for its welfare.

The number of consumers valuing high-quality natural food is growing year by year. Therefore, a regional trend is establishment of new orchards, apiaries, milk processing plants, development of farms and fishing businesses. The resurrection of old traditions is favoured by such events as “At the Orchard on Saturday” Local Fair of Good Food, the Masurian Fair of Locally Arranged Tastes and Sundries, or the “Beautiful and Delicious” Christmas Fair.

There are currently 136 entrepreneurs in the province – farmers, food processors and restaurant keepers holding the Culinary Heritage certificate, of which most are found in Masuria.



The final priority industry of the region is **Timber and Furniture**, involving more than 1,000 companies in the region. The gift of nature which is the excellent raw material, along with the high product quality, have propelled the region into the third position among the European Union countries as a manufacturer of wood products, such as plywood, engineered wood or veneer sheets. Additionally, as much as 13% of the greatest companies in the furniture industry are found in the Warmia-Masuria Province, and the manufactured furniture reach the markets throughout Europe.



A PLACE TO COMBINE WORK WITH RELAX

Although the geographical location of Masuria still remains the same, the last decade has made the **Land of Great Masurian Lakes available at hand**. We owe this, above all, to the construction of the road infrastructure, the development of railroads, the Olsztyn-Mazury airport, as well as the almost ubiquitous Wi-Fi network.

The **Olsztyn-Mazury airport** stands out with its architecture, blending well into the natural landscape of the region. The network of connections includes Berlin, Kraków, Wrocław, Munich, Warszawa, London, Oslo, Dortmund, Cologne, Bremen, and Burgas. The port is Poland's second airport enabling passengers from the sector of private

aeroplanes to benefit from the GA Premium services (access to priority check-in with top-quality service and safety standards observed).

Regular seasonal connections and charter flights translate into specific results: visitors use the hotel, catering and recreation facilities throughout the region, and **entrepreneurs are more eager to choose Masuria as the seat of their company**. Of similar importance is the modernization of the road (including the S7 expressway connecting Kraków, Warszawa and Gdańsk; new sections of S8 and S16) as well as railway (e.g. lines to Giżycko, Pisz, Ruciane-Nida) infrastructure.



The hotel offer of Masuria adapts itself to the global trends, trying to exceed the guest expectations. One can easily find accommodation to suit their needs and wishes: at an exquisite palace or in a barn, at a rural cottage or in high-class modern interiors. Therefore, organizers of business trips and remote workers came to love the green oasis of north-eastern Poland.

Organizers of many industry events choose Masuria due to the region's charm and hotels, perfectly adapted to such events. They are attended by entrepreneurs and scholars – leaders of different industries and experts in their fields.

25 years ago, global corporations introduced the idea of business events to Poland. Today, thanks to the constantly broadening offer of attractions, Masuria can compete with Pomerania or southern Poland in the area of event organization. The Masurian calendar abounds in musical festivals, picnics or comedy marathons. In the open, one

can conduct outdoor games, geocaching, survival, bicycle rallies, or mushroom picking and herbalism workshops. Water is favourable to regattas, kayaking rallies, as well as angling, courses of windsurfing, kitesurfing or diving. Horseback riding enthusiasts will never be bored either. In winter, Masuria offers beautiful cross-country skiing routes and three downhill slopes. They also invite for snow-kiting competitions and iceboat regattas.

No wonder that the number of company cars passing through the gates of Masuria is constantly growing.

The faster technology and civilization are developing, the more we miss what we have sacrificed for their sake. Here, we can find nature and calm, but also comfort and convenient Wi-Fi access, which will allow us to combine work with relax.



BUSINESS IN MASURIA? NATURALLY!

The idea of sustainable development combined with care for the environment is a concept close to the Masurian local governments and entrepreneurs. They are becoming increasingly aware they are the ones responsible for both the present and the future. This allows us to go with the time while simultaneously protecting the region's natural heritage.

The principle of responsible business starts playing a crucial role in Masuria. Ecology is more than just an abstract concept from a public service announcement. It has become everyday practice. Large companies adapt to the growing environmental requirements, introducing new procedures. Small ones, such as agritourist farms or food manufactories, build their business identities around this concept.

In the **Development Strategy of the Land of Great Lakes**, a significant role is played by implementation of undertakings which employ **green energy**. New photovoltaic installations are established on buildings. Structures subject to thermal upgrading please people with their appearance and help conserve energy, while local government bodies invest in energy-

-saving systems of lighting, heating and energy consumption management. The development of electromobility and use of renewable energy is of special importance for the area having its natural environment as its essential asset. We care for water resources, and constantly improve the state of the infrastructure intended to serve the inhabitants and provide opportunities for development to those who have chosen Masuria as a place to put their business ideas into being.

With civilization marching on and the achievements of technology, **Masuria is much "closer to the world" than it used to be**. This is appreciated by many Polish and foreign investors who choose this exact region for the seat of their company. Such a decision is also favoured by the pro-business attitude of the local government bodies from the Land of Great Masurian Lakes, as well as the offered institutional support. And although the stereotype keeps predominantly associating Masuria with relax, this region is increasingly spoken about as a perfect place for creation of innovative businesses.



 **Great Masurian
Lakes 2020**
Association

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