

Solidarity and mutuality:

stable values in an unstable world



Gdańsk
6 – 8/06

2012





Dear friends,

There are few cities in the world like Gdańsk.

There are few cities in the world where, if you listen carefully, you might hear echoes of history like no other – heavy steps of medieval knights, cries of Flemish merchants and English wool traders, shouts of Polish noblemen, laughter of Napoleon’s soldiers, roar of battleship guns firing the first shots of the Second World War, noise of innumerable crowds chanting for freedom from communism. There are few cities in the world where, if you watch carefully, you might catch the shadows of Arthur Schopenhauer in the garden of his family home, of Daniel Fahrenheit measuring temperatures in his little room, of Günter Grass walking to school with a rucksack full of books, of a young worker named Lech Wałęsa running to catch a bus for a morning shift at the shipyard.

There are few cities in the world which have lived their motto as fully as Gdańsk has. “Nec temere, nec timide” – “neither threatening nor afraid”, Gdańsk has always been ready to stand in defence of its values. There are few places in the world more fitting to welcome the world of mutuals, standing strong in defence of their own values, and to allow them to broadcast their message of solidarity and mutuality in these uncertain times.

Dear friends, welcome to the proud cradle of solidarity, welcome to Gdańsk.

Grzegorz Buczkowski
President
TUW SKOK





Dear friends,

AMICE's biennial Congress is the occasion for European mutual and cooperative insurers to discuss opportunities and challenges for the sector and to exchange views with European and national authorities and other stakeholders.

The 2012 Congress promises to be an exceptional event, not only have we been working hard to make sure the conference programme meets your professional expectations but we have the chance to be in the heart of Europe's recent history.

We all followed the events in central Europe during the 80's and now we have the chance to visit the place where it all started, the Gdańsk shipyards, and to meet the man who symbolises the Solidarity movement, Lech Wałęsa. But the city is more than that. As you will see in the following pages, this area of the Baltic coast is well worth the visit.

Our congress programme covers the usual regulatory issues which we cannot avoid like Solvency II but also aims to get us all thinking differently about our business and the ways it should be developing for future generations.

I invite you all to join us in Gdańsk in June for AMICE's third Congress "**Solidarity & mutuality: stable values in an unstable world**".

Asmo Kalpala
President
AMICE



Congress programme

Tuesday, 5 June 2012

19:00 – 22:00 | Dinner for AMICE Board members.

Wednesday, 6 June 2012

All meetings take place at the Radisson Blu Hotel

14:00 – 18:00 | Registration of delegates for the Congress at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

09:00 – 13:00 | AMICE Board Meeting.

13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch for AMICE Board members.

14:30 – 15:00 | Welcome coffee for General Meeting participants.

15:00 – 17:30 | AMICE General Meeting.

Evening

19:25 | Meet in the lobby of your hotel and walk to Artus Court.

19:30 | Welcome reception at Artus Court for Congress delegates and accompanying persons.

21:30 | End of reception.

Accompanying persons' tour

15:15 | Meet in the lobby of your hotel.

15:30 | Amber walking tour of Gdańsk.

17:30 | Return to the hotel.

Thursday, 7 June 2012

All meetings take place at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall

08:00 – 18:00 | Registration of delegates at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall.

08:00 – 09:00 | Sponsor workshops.

09:00 – 11:00 | Opening Session.

11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee Break.

11:30 – 13:00 | Session I "Beyond Solvency II: forthcoming EU initiatives".

13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch.

14:00 – 15:30 | Session IIa "Solvency II solutions" & Session IIb "Corporate Social Responsibility, an asset of company strategy".

15:30 – 16:00 | Coffee Break.

16:00 – 17:30 | Session III "21st Century Financial Mutuality".

Evening

19:00 | Meet in the lobby of your hotel and bus to gala dinner.

19:30 – 23:00 | Gala dinner for Congress delegates and accompanying persons at Gdańsk Shipyard Centre.

23:00 | Return from Gdańsk Shipyard Centre by bus.

Accompanying persons' tour

09:15 | Meet in the lobby of your hotel.

09:30 | TriCity tour by bus and by boat.

16:00 | Return to the hotel.



Friday, 8 June 2012

All meetings take place at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall

- 08:00 – 15:00 Information desk at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall.
- 08:00 – 09:00 Sponsor workshops.
- 09:00 – 10:30 Session IV “Are mutuals the cure for Europe’s healthcare system?”.
- 10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break.
- 11:00 – 12:30 Session V “Adapting mutuality to tomorrow’s society”.
- 12:30 – 13:00 Closing of the Congress.
- 13:00 Lunch.
- Accompanying persons’ tour*
- 09:15 Meet in the lobby of your hotel.
- 09:30 Westerplatte and Oliwa tour by bus and by boat.
- 13:00 Return to the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall for lunch with Congress delegates.
- Afternoon*
- 15:15 Meet in the lobby of your hotel.
- 15:30 Solidarity walking tour of Gdańsk for Congress delegates & accompanying persons.
- 17:30 Return to the hotel.

Post-congress tours

Saturday, 9 June 2012

- 08:45 Meet in the lobby of your hotel.
- 09:00 – 16:00 Malbork tour or Kaszuby tour.
- 09:00 – 17:00 AMICE golf tournament or golf academy.
- 16:00 – 17:00 Return to the hotel.

Sunday, 10 June 2012

- 08:45 Meet in the lobby of your hotel.
- 09:00 – 16:00 Malbork tour or Kaszuby tour.
- 18:00 The Congress hosts are in the process of organizing tickets for the UEFA Euro 2012 game (Spain vs. Italy) at Gdańsk PGE Arena. If you are interested in tickets, please indicate this upon registration.



Welcome to Gdańsk

Gdańsk is a city of almost half a million people, located on the Bay of Gdańsk on the Baltic Sea, near the estuary of the biggest river in Poland – Wisła. It is the largest part of the so called TriCity, a metropolitan area consisting of Gdańsk and the neighbouring cities of Sopot and Gdynia. The city dates back to the 9th century A.D. when its so called golden period began, and during which Gdańsk was one of the most important trade and craft centres of the Baltic Sea. Unfortunately, later it was also witness to the partitions of Poland and the arena of dramatic events during the Second World War. Fortunately, both the city and its inhabitants always possessed unbreakable will and, thanks to their efforts, Gdańsk was rebuilt.

The modern history of the TriCity is intertwined with the strikes in the 1970s and 1980s, which were one of the causes of the fall of the communist system in Poland and still live in the memory of Poles. Lech Wałęsa was the leader of the strike at the Gdańsk Shipyard, one of the building blocks of the “Solidarity” trade union and social movement. The legendary trade union leader later became a laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize and president of Poland.



One local specialty of Gdańsk is amber - formed thousands of years ago from fossilised resin washed ashore on sandy Polish beaches: and which will make a perfect souvenir of your stay in Gdańsk and the Baltic Sea. The more “adventurous” will undoubtedly like Goldwasser, a strong herbal liqueur (based, in its original, 16th century form, on a mixture of over 20 different herbs) with 22-23 carat gold flakes suspended in it. Among the enthusiasts of this liquor were Louis XIV, king of France, and the empress of Russia, Catherine the Great. Who knows, maybe you will join this fan club?





"Gdańsk is smaller and more intimate than you would expect. It is the perfect city for strikes, uprisings and revolutions. The cranes at the shipyards, the church steeples, the hotel apartment for the foreign press, the inner city with its Dutch renaissance houses, all are within fifteen minutes' walk of each other. How many revolutions have failed because the movement was too diffused, too fragmented? Here it is the very opposite, here you can literally shout freedom from the housetops and everyone will hear.

It was in this forest of churches and cranes that it all started, the tiny fissures that ultimately brought about the earthquake of 1989."

Geert Mak, In Europe: Travels Through the Twentieth Century.



Conference venue



The Congress will take place at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall. This building, on Ołowianka Island, previously housed the city power station. After renovation it became the perfect venue for concerts and conferences.



City plan



- ① **GDAŃSK SHIPYARD LOFTS**
Gdańsk, Doki 1
- ② **HOTEL ADMIRAŁ**
Gdańsk, Tobiasza 9
- ③ **POLISH BALTIC PHILHARMONIC HALL**
Gdańsk, Ołowianka 1
- ④ **HOTEL ARTUS**
Gdańsk, Piwna 36/39
- ⑤ **ARTUS COURT**
Gdańsk, Długi Targ 43/44
- ⑥ **HOTEL RADISSON BLU SAS**
Gdańsk, Długi Targ 19
- ⑦ **HOTEL NOVOTEL GDAŃSK CENTRUM**
Gdańsk, Pszenna 1



Hotels

The Congress hosts have negotiated rates with four hotels in Gdańsk, all of which are within walking distance of the Congress venue. The number of rooms is limited and they will be attributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Please indicate your first, second and third choices when registering. Full payment will be requested upon departure from the hotel but a credit card is required to guarantee your reservation. See the practical information section for information about cancellations.

RADISSON BLU SAS ★★★★★

Gdańsk, Długi Targ 19

SGL occupancy – 1000 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

DBL occupancy – 1150 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

With 134 chic and stylish rooms, this hotel offers guests unrivalled luxury. Guest rooms feature amenities such as free, high-speed, wireless Internet access, heated bathroom floors and LCD TVs. The hotel has a restaurant serving French cuisine and an Irish-inspired bar. The fully equipped recreation centre has a sauna and steam room.

Situated in the heart of Old Town and the Royal Track, this hotel is opposite Artus Court.



ADMIRAŁ ★★★★★

Gdańsk, Tobiasza 9

SGL occupancy – 1080 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

DBL occupancy – 1150 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

We have the pleasure to invite you to the recently opened Hotel Admiral, situated in a quiet street between Gdańsk Old Town and the Motława River. The hotel offers 44 air-conditioned rooms and is adapted for guests with disabilities. All rooms are equipped with TV, an internet connection, WIFI internet zones, a mini-bar, safe and tea/coffee making equipment. The hotel's air conditioned restaurant serves regional cuisine and the hotel pub provides a calm ambience and a taste of spirits from around the world. In their free time, guests may take advantage of the recreation centre equipped with dry, steam sauna, and hydro massage.





NOVOTEL GDAŃSK CENTRUM ★★★

Gdańsk, Pszenna 1

SGL occupancy – 1080 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

DBL occupancy – 1150 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

The Novotel Gdańsk Centrum lies on the Granary Island just a few steps from the most beautiful Old Town monuments. The hotel offers 158 modern double rooms with air conditioning, minibar, safe, internet connection, satellite TV, Pay TV, telephone and 24 hour room service; also rooms for non-smokers and disabled persons. The “Garden Brasserie” restaurant offers traditional Polish and international cuisine, while the bar invites guests to try tasty snacks and splendid cocktails.



ARTUS ★★★

Gdańsk, Piwna 36/39

SGL occupancy – 750 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

DBL occupancy – 800 PLN / night including tax and breakfast.

In the heart of Gdańsk Old Town, located between the Basilica of St. Mary’s and the City Hall, this boutique hotel is housed in an historic building, combining a surprisingly contemporary interior style with professional service. The hotel has 50 rooms, including 36 double rooms, 12 single rooms and 2 apartments, each with a unique character. Each room has a bathroom, satellite TV, telephone, minibar, safe and access to the internet. The Artus Hotel offers a wide range of services including a Wellness Beauty Salon. The adjoining Café Bar Mon Balzac is open to hotel guests and visitors from outside from breakfast until late.



Social programme

Our hosts have arranged a selection of sightseeing tours and activities during the congress that will be available not only for the accompanying persons, but also for delegates during and after the Congress. All tours are operated on a minimum 8 person/tour basis. The post congress tours, golf academy and Euro 2012 are optional and not included in the registration fee. All tours can be made available on request at any time for an extra fee.

Accompanying Persons' Tours

Wednesday, 6 June 2012

15:30 – 17:30

Amber walking tour

Amber is particularly associated with the Baltic region because of the abundance of deposits in the area. For historical reasons (the Western Prussia Natural Museum in the Green Gate existed before WWII) and most of all because of its current activities, Gdańsk holds the title of the world capital of amber. We invite you to visit the amber workshop, established in Gdańsk in 1893, the only one open to the public. This is a great chance to learn the history of amber as well as of amber art. The tour begins with a presentation of the unique inclusions (insects caught in amber) found in the workshop's collection. Next, you will learn about old and new techniques used in polishing amber and will be able to polish amber personally under the supervision of a master craftsman. The workshop visit ends with an exhibition of amber jewellery. After this experience, you will visit the Amber Museum located in a listed XIV century Gothic building with Renaissance additions, the Fore Gate Complex of Długa Street, which is unique even at a European level, and used to be a key element of the medieval fortifications. Finally, we invite you for an amber walk around the Old Town.



Thursday, 7 June 2012

09:30 – 16:00

TriCity Tour

The three towns along the Baltic coast, Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia, are known as the TriCity. This tour will begin with a walk through the historical area of Gdańsk Old Town before heading to the Shipyard Workers' Monument at Solidarność Square, commemorating the protests at Gdańsk shipyards which began the Solidarity movement. Heading off in a northerly direction, we will travel through the Wrzeszcz district where Günter Grass, the Nobel Prize novelist, was born.

We will continue to the beautiful Baltic seaside resort of Sopot for a walk on the beach and lunch. The next stop is Gdynia, the leading Polish port, to visit its sailing ship Dar Pomorza and battle ship ORP Błyskawica. The Błyskawica is a destroyer that saw action in World War II alongside Allied Forces in Narvik, Dunkirk and during the Normandy landings. Dar Pomorza is a three-masted training vessel, built in 1909 and decommissioned in 1981 – both ships are now open as museums.

Part of this tour will be by pleasure boat.



Friday, 8 June 2012

9:30 – 13:00

Westerplatte and Oliwa Tour.

It was at Westerplatte that the first shots of World War II were fired on 01.09.1939. The German Battleship Schleswig Holstein opened fire on Polish ammunition dumps in the Free City of Gdańsk. The Germans expected the capture of Westerplatte to take a matter of hours, but the 182-man garrison under Major Henryk Sucharski resisted for seven days, their heroism becoming a symbol of Polish resistance in the struggle against the Nazi invasion. On the way to Westerplatte by boat, there will be a chance to see the unique Wisłoujście Fortress. Fortifications were first built at this strategic point at the mouth of the River Vistula in the time of the Teutonic Knights. The second part of the tour takes us to the historical Oliwa district which was once the base of wealthy Cisterians, who built a cathedral and monastery here. The present cathedral, built in the XIV century in Gothic style, replaced the original XIII century Romanesque church that was destroyed by fire in 1350. While the exterior has survived without major alteration, the interior has been redecorated in the Baroque style. You will have a chance to listen to its famous organ. The monastery buildings are surrounded by Oliwa Park with lakes and wooded hills, a pleasant place for a walk. The tour will bring you back to the Congress venue in time for lunch with delegates.



Delegates' and accompanying persons' social events

Wednesday evening, 6 June 2012

19:30 – 21:30

Welcome Reception

The Welcome Reception will be held at Artus Court (Długi Targ 43/44). Artus Court was a meeting place for the wealthy burghers of Gdańsk, who were inspired by the chivalrous tradition of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Similar fraternities were set up throughout Europe, and they were particularly fashionable in the cities of the Hanseatic League.

All registered delegates and accompanying persons are invited to the Welcome Reception. Please indicate your participation on your registration form. The dress code is smart business attire.

Thursday evening, 7 June 2012

19:30 – 23:00

Gala Dinner

The Gala Dinner will be held at the Gdańsk Shipyard Lofts which are located at the very centre of the Gdańsk Shipyard (Długi Targ 43/44), known throughout the world as the birthplace of Solidarity.

In December 1970, a shipyard workers' strike and protests in the city were crushed by the authorities. The next strike, in 1980, led to the establishment of the independent Solidarity Trade Union. The strike leader was Lech Wałęsa who was to become President of Poland. Since 1989, in free market conditions, the shipyard has proved commercially unviable.

Entertainment will be provided by the famous jazz pianist Leszek Możdżer.

All registered delegates and accompanying persons are invited to the Gala Dinner. Please indicate your participation on your registration form. The dress code is black tie.

Friday afternoon, 8 June 2012

15:30 – 17:30

Solidarity walking tour

This tour of Gdańsk - on an infamous Ikarus bus - will focus on the places, museums and houses connected with our communist past, including the longest apartment block in Europe, Mrówkowiec. From the Solidarity Square with the Monument of the Shipyard Workers, the tour will visit the newly opened European Centre of Solidarity exhibition "Roads to Freedom", which recreates daily life during socialist times. We will see a reconstruction of an empty-shelved grocery shop, a permanently broken phone booth, food coupons and other objects commemorating the good and the bad of living conditions under a centrally planned economy. We will also watch a short documentary showing the policy against Solidarity protesters. All registered delegates and accompanying persons are invited on this tour. Please indicate your participation on your registration form.



Post Congress Tours

Saturday, 9 June 2012 or Sunday, 10 June 2012

09:00 – 16:00

Malbork tour

Sit back and enjoy a trip through the centuries as your next stop will be the former stronghold of the Teutonic Order, overlooking the Nogat river and part of the Pomorze district that was the Order's territory.

Built almost 200 years ago, the castle of Malbork has resisted both time and the conflicts that occurred in front of its mighty walls so, to this day, everyone who ventures through Malbork can still feel the medieval atmosphere of one of the oldest and greatest castles in Europe. The castle and its museum are listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Inside, for those interested, is the largest amber exhibition in Poland. Ghost hunters will learn of many local legends. There is a corridor leading to a tower which holds a strange power, even the dogs that are released at night to guard the whole castle do not dare to enter it... After so much walking, you must be hungry. Know no fear as the Order's cuisine is more than enough to fuel you for many more hours of traversing the endless corridors of Malbork... Just joking, bon appetit!

price per person – 470 PLN



Saturday, 9 June 2012 or Sunday, 10 June 2012

09:00 – 16:00

Kaszuby tour

Set off for a guided tour across the vast forests of the area of Kaszuby called Switzerland. Lush forests surrounding a multitude of lakes and ponds create such a beautiful landscape that even if you are under 30, you will start to think about settling down here when you grow old... In Kaszuby woods there is an unusual heritage park. As soon as you enter the upside-down house, every step gets harder and harder as your brain cannot correlate what you see and where you stand. It's actually quite funny to watch other people almost running towards the wall – as long as you are able to resist! Descend deep into a reconstruction of the bunker used by members of the "Gryf Pomorski" military organization during WWII. After passing through narrow corridors, you will reach a small room, where in almost complete darkness, you will be able to get a glimpse of what those brave soldiers felt and heard when Nazi bombers were raining bombs upon them. Use your imagination again once you find yourself in the reconstruction of a wooden hut serving as home for people exiled to the freezing cold and hostile territory of Siberia.

Lunch will be served in a typical Kaszuby restaurant.

price per person – 470 PLN



Saturday, 9 June 2012

09:00 – 17:00

AMICE golf tournament



An AMICE golf tournament will be available for AMICE's delegates at the end of the congress at the Sierra Golf Club located 45 km from Gdańsk City Centre. The course was designed by the Scottish golf course architect, Cameron Sinclair. The natural lay of the land (covering 82 ha) was moulded into numerous hills and valleys, the streams and backwaters were cleaned and widened.

The Sierra Golf Club meets all the world standards, offering a full-scale, 18 hole master class golf course (par 72), equipped with a modern driving range (26 stands sheltered from the rain), putting, chipping and pitching green. The tournament will last about 5 hours and will be operated on an 8 person minimum basis. The tournament is free for Congress delegates and accompanying persons. Clubs can be hired at a cost of 150 PLN.

If you are not a golf player yet, you can try the Golf Academy!

For everyone wanting to acquire a taste for golf, we offer the famous Sierra Golf Academy. This is the best way to get started with golf. Golf beginners will learn a bit of golf history, the rules for using golf clubs and finally start to swing, putt and chip and... play a 9 hole tournament. The duration of the activity is about 4 hours. The activity will be operated on a 4 person minimum basis.

Price per person – 830 PLN includes: Green Fee (9 holes); Instruction by Head Pro; Set of clubs; Transfer; Lunch and beverages.



General Information

Arriving by air (www.airport.gdansk.pl)

Gdańsk Lech Walesa Airport is one of three main international airports in Poland, with Warsaw and Cracow being the other two. It is in Rebiechowo, just 10 km from Gdańsk city centre, a similar distance from Sopot and 23 km from Gdynia city centre.

New roads are being built which will allow passengers to reach Gdańsk city centre by taxi in about 15-20 minutes. The cost is approx. 70 PLN. Public Bus 210 operates from the airport to the main railway station.

Direct flights are currently available to Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Munich, Stockholm, Dusseldorf and Oslo with regular airlines, and to Cologne, Eindhoven, London, Paris, Rome, Berlin, Riga, Hamburg and Barcelona with low cost airlines.

See the congress website to book your flight.

Automatic cash dispenser

Use automats ("bankomat") called e-card or euronet or any bank branch ATM for bank or credit card withdrawals. These can be found at Gdańsk airport and in the city centre. Fees may vary, please consult your card issuer.

Badges

Your personal name badge is your entrance ticket to all sessions and other activities of the congress. Please wear this badge at all times.

Beaches

The Baltic coast near Gdańsk has beautiful white, wide beaches and is highly recommended for a holiday. Almost all beaches in Poland are accessed via a short walk through protected pine forests – not only does this smell beautiful but it also keeps buildings away from the beach, which remains "wild" and unspoilt. Most beaches in seaside towns have sections guarded by lifeguards so you can swim in safety.

Bureaux de change

Money can also be changed in the numerous bureaux de change – KANTOR (PL), which sometimes offer better rates than banks and usually do not charge a commission as banks commonly do.

Cancellation fees

Cancellation of participation: all cancellations must be made in writing to congress@amicgdansk.eu. For cancellations received by 5 March 2012, there will be reimbursement of 100% of the fees paid. For cancellations received by 5 April 2012, 50% of the fees paid will be reimbursed. For cancellation received by 5 May 2012, 25% of the fees paid will be reimbursed.

No reimbursements will be made for cancellations received after 5 May 2012. Please note that there will be no refund for no-shows.

Hotel cancellation: all cancellations must be made in writing to congress@amicgdansk.eu. For cancellations received by 5 April 2012, guests will be charged for one night's accommodation. After 5 April 2012, guests will be charged for the whole reservation. Please note that no-shows will be charged for the whole reservation.

Tour cancellation: all cancellations must be made in writing to congress@amicgdansk.eu. For cancellations received by 15 May 2012, there will be reimbursement of the tour price paid. No reimbursements will be made for cancellations received after 15 May 2012. Please note that there will be no refund for no-shows.



Congress information

Information on the web site will be updated regularly: www.amicegdansk.eu.

Congress registration upon arrival in Gdańsk

The registration and information desk will be open:

- at the Radisson Blu Hotel on Wednesday, 6 June from 14:00 to 18:00
- at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall on Thursday, 7 June from 08:00 to 18:00
- at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall on Friday, 8 June from 08:00 to 15:00.

Volunteers will manage information desks at all hotels during the Congress.

Credit cards

Credit cards are accepted in many places in TriCity (Gdańsk, Sopot, Gdynia), especially in hotels, restaurants, car rental agencies and smart shops. Establishments usually post the logos of accepted cards on the door; however it is wise to ask about any additional conditions for payment by card, such as the minimum value of a purchase. Privately owned shops are often willing to give a discount for cash payment, since they will in any case lose money in commission on a credit card transaction. As elsewhere, credit

cards can also be used for withdrawing money in banks or from cash dispensers.

Currency

1 złoty (PLN) = 100 groszy (PLN)

1 EUR \approx 4,5 złote (PLN)

1 \$US \approx 3,5 złote (PLN)

Most banks are open from 8:00 right through to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

Dining

Meal times in Poland are generally:

Breakfast: 6:30 – 11:00

Lunch: 13:00 – 15:00

Dinner: 18:00 – 21:00

Many classic Polish dishes are offered at restaurants: the national dishes, bigos or pierogi, come from eastern Poland. Fish features strongly on menus in the Pomeranian Region, where herring (śledź) is a central part of the diet. It comes pickled, in oil, with onion, with sour cream – in fact, with just about everything. Rolmops po kaszubsku (marinated herring wrapped around pickled onion, then spiked with cloves and dipped in soured cream) are widely enjoyed. Other popular fish are freshwater trout (pstrąg) – served simply grilled with boiled potatoes.

A treat in early summer is smoked salmon served with spears of fresh asparagus (łosoś wędzony ze szparagami) which is in season then.

- Bigos: hunks of meat and sausage are simmered with sauerkraut, cabbage, onion, potatoes, herbs and spices.
- Smalec: this snack consists of fried lard, liberally sprinkled with sea salt, and eaten with chunks of crusty bread. It can be found as a bar snack in most pubs and makes a good accompaniment to beer.
- Pierogi: these ravioli-style dumplings may be stuffed with meat, sauerkraut, mushrooms, cheese or fruit.
- Barszcz: this beetroot soup, flavoured with lemon and garlic, may be served clear or with beans or potatoes.
- Makowiec: a rich yeasted dough wrapped around a sweet poppy-seed filling and baked until lightly golden.
- Precele: these popular, freshly baked, street snacks can be found at train and bus stations first thing in the morning.

Dress code

The dress code for all congress sessions and the welcome reception is smart business attire. For the gala dinner, the dress code is black tie. For the tours, we would advise comfortable shoes and a hat (in case of rain or sun).



Electric current

The electric current in Poland is 220V (50 Hz). Plugs and sockets are the same as in the continental countries of the European Union. British and American participants need plug adapters for electrical appliances.

Emergency telephone numbers

Emergency phone number: 112

Police: 977

Ambulance: 999

Fire Department: 998

Fees

The delegate fee includes the congress information folders, participation in all sessions, coffee breaks and lunches on Thursday and Friday, the Welcome Reception on Wednesday and the Gala Dinner on Thursday, the walking tour on Friday, and the golf tournament on Saturday. The accompanying person's fee includes the Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner and the tours on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and the golf tournament on Saturday. The following fees (including 23% VAT) are valid for all registrations:

- AMICE member 900 EUR
- AMICE non-member 1300 EUR
- Accompanying guest 500 EUR

Payment can be made:

- Via a secure on-line process on the Congress website.

- Via bank transfer to the Congress account:

BRE Bank:

8 Wały Jagiellońskie Street,

80-900 Gdańsk P.O. BOX 48

Account no: PL91114010650000405129001002

BIC: 1140 1065

IBAN: PL 91 1140 1065 0000 4051 2900 1002

SWIFT Code: BREX PL PW

NIP: 526-021-50-88

REGON: 001254524

Payment must be made upon reception of the invoice: your registration will be confirmed once payment has been received.

Health

Before leaving on a journey, travellers should find out about health insurance in their own country and whether that country has a social security agreement with Poland that covers health care during a temporary stay and, if so, what the procedure is for obtaining compensation.

If the traveller comes from a country with which Poland has a bilateral or multilateral agreement providing for urgent medical care during a temporary stay and can prove entitlement to treatment as required, he or she will be liable for the same charges as a person resident in Poland.

Insurance

The congress organizers cannot accept liability for personal injuries sustained, for loss of, or damage to property belonging to congress participants (or their accompanying persons), either during or as a result of the congress. Please check the validity of your own travel insurance.

Internet

There is now a free wi-fi network in the centre of both Gdańsk and Sopot. In both cases you are looking for the wi-fi signal which appears as FreeHotSpot WP. Once you have selected this network you should open your web browser. There you will automatically be taken to a login page (in Polish only) for Wirtualna Polska. It is easy to log in. Hotels provide wi-fi access, sometimes for free.



Official language

Polish is the official language. Below are a few words to get you started.

Tak – yes

Nie – no

Dzień dobry – Good Morning / Good Afternoon

Dobry wieczór – Good Evening

Cześć - Hi

Proszę – please

Dziękuję – thank you

English and German are also widely spoken.

At the congress, simultaneous interpretation will be offered in English, French, German, Spanish and Polish.

Registration

Registration for the congress and social programme as well as accommodation booking should preferably be made using the on-line registration form via the congress website www.amicegdansk.eu.

If you do not have internet access, you may also register and book your hotel using the enclosed registration form.

Safety and security

In general Gdańsk is far safer than most Western cities, and visitors are unlikely to face any problems. Petty crime does exist, and travellers should be on guard against pickpockets working tram and bus routes by the train station. If you're in a bar or a restaurant keep your wallet inside your trouser pocket, not inside a jacket casually left lying around.

Shopping

Gdańsk is a dream place for buying gifts and souvenirs. Here you can find unusual and original items made by local artists and reminiscent of the old city of Gdańsk, or gadgets presenting its history and the beauty of its architecture.

Gdańsk is most of all famous for amber which visitors can buy as simple pieces of jewellery at roadside stalls, as beautiful pieces made by Gdańsk jewellers or as real amber works of art. Many amber shops, as well as other "small shops with soul", such as antique shops, art galleries, coin and stamp shops, as well as shops with traditional folklore products, can be found in the city centre.

Shops are open from 10:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday, and, in the main, from 10:00 to 14:00 on Saturdays. Large shops usually close at 19:00, Monday to Saturday. Most department stores stay open for an extra hour and close at 20:00, Monday to Saturday.

Taxi

It is advisable only to use a taxi from a taxi company – identifiable by roof signs bearing the company's name and telephone number – and to be especially careful around the airport. Super Hallo Taxi Gdańsk is the recommended company during the congress, offering a special rate to participants.

There is no charge for taxis ordered by phone (+48 58 191-91) although there is a charge when hailing a taxi in the street.

After 22:00, on Saturdays and Sundays, and in remote parts of town, rates per kilometre are higher.

Telephone

International country code: +48 (Poland)

International code of Gdańsk: + 48 58



Time zone

Central European Time (+1 h from Greenwich Mean Time GMT, plus 1 hour in summer).

Tipping

Tipping etiquette can be confusing for foreigners. While in other countries it's polite to say 'thanks' (dziękuję) when a waiter collects the money, in Poland, uttering the word thank you is taken as a sign that you won't be wanting any change back.

This cultural slip-up can get very expensive. For the most part it is common to reward good service with a 10% tip once you have received your change.

Transportation

Public transport in Gdańsk is diverse and developed. Citizens and tourists can use a network of bus and tram lines providing access to most locations in Gdańsk. Public transport operates from 05:00 to 22:00. There are also night buses available, which run on average every 1.5 hours. Additionally, the city transport system is supported by the Fast City Train (SKM) connecting the neighbouring cities. The city also offers

a network of railway and bus connections for those living outside the region.

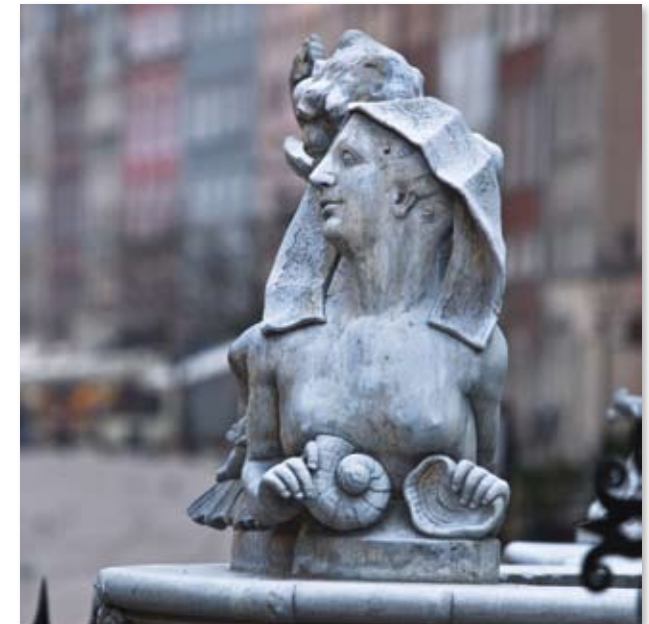
Bus and tram tickets can be purchased from newsagents or ticket machines located on every bus or at tram stops and must be validated (punched) once you board.

Visas

Since Poland joined the European Union, members of the EU, and citizens of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US, can enter Poland without a visa and stay for a period of three months (British citizens can stay for six months). Visas are obligatory for citizens of any country which does not have an agreement with Poland – you'll find a relevant list on www.msz.gov.pl. Visas are not available at airports or land or sea borders and therefore must be procured from a Polish consulate outside of Poland. Since 21 October 2007, Poland has been a member of the Schengen agreement leading to the elimination of border posts between member countries.

Weather

The weather in June should be sunny and mild, with temperatures upwards of 20°C, yet some showers can be expected. The period of daylight is very long (from 04:00 to 22:00). With the area neatly set out along the Baltic coast, weather patterns change quickly so it's best to be prepared; use the three-day forecast on the congress website www.amicegdansk.eu to help plan your trip.



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