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E-BOOK

by SITE Poland

destination POLAND GREEN ACADEMY

PROJECT REPORT:

INSIGHTS AND IMPACT



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E-BOOK STRUCTURE

Destination Poland Green Academy

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INTRODUCTION

Poland's Journey Towards Sustainable Destinations. From Leaders of Change to New Participants in the Transformation



Aneta Książek
Director of the Poland Convention Bureau / Polish Tourism Organisation
Honorary Member of SITE Poland

Just a few years ago, sustainability in the meetings industry was treated as an add-on to many destination's marketing strategies. Today, it has become one of the most important criteria influencing the choice of location for a congress, conference or incentive trip. Organisers expect specific data on carbon footprints, certified venues, ESG policies, accessibility, social initiatives and the measurable impact of events on local communities. Increasingly, they ask not only about conference facilities or the number of hotel rooms, but also about how a city manages energy, transport, waste and local heritage.

Global research on the meetings industry clearly demonstrates a shift in client expectations. According to the *ICCA and Destination Canada 2025* report, 66% of international associations already consider sustainability to be a very or extremely important aspect of their operations, while 62% incorporate it directly into the event planning process. At the same time, the *Amex GBT Global Meetings & Events Forecast 2026* indicates that 40% of attendees expect visible sustainability initiatives at events. This means that, for many meeting organizers, ESG, accessibility and the responsible impact of events are becoming not a competitive advantage, but a baseline requirement for entering the market.

As early as 2022, when publishing the *Global Association Meetings Protocol*, ICCA identified *Sustainability, Equity & Legacy* as the first of four pillars shaping the future of the meetings industry. Today, we can see that these forecasts have become a reality.

Client expectations, ESG requirements and the growing importance of events' social impact have made sustainability one of the key factors shaping a destination's competitiveness.

The growing expectations of event organisers are also confirmed by the *Q3 Meetings & Events Pulse Survey 2024,* conducted by Global DMC Partners and published by PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association).

The survey involved 164 meetings industry professionals, including corporate meeting planners, event agencies and association event organisers. The results revealed clear

regional differences while also confirming the growing importance of sustainability in the event planning process. As many as 76% of planners from Europe and other international markets reported incorporating sustainability elements into most or all of their events, compared with 47% in North America.

The survey also indicates that organisers increasingly expect destinations and suppliers to provide specific environmental solutions and credible data demonstrating progress towards ESG goals. The cost of implementing such solutions remains the greatest barrier, cited by nearly 80% of respondents.

Poland has embraced this transformation with real energy and growing awareness. Crucially, this change is not limited to the largest urban centres. While just a few years ago the discussion about sustainable destinations focused on the most recognisable cities, today we can increasingly see the potential of regional centres, which are building their own unique market position through cooperation between local stakeholders, authentic experiences and responsible development.

Poland already has its green leaders

The most advanced tool for assessing destination sustainability remains the **Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index),** an international benchmark developed by GDS-Movement, ICCA, CityDNA, IMEX Group and MCI.

Just a few years ago, Poland was not represented in this prestigious group. Today, four Polish cities actively participate in the index:

Kraków	from 2022
Gdańsk	from 2023
Wrocław	from 2025
Szczecin	from 2025

These cities are setting the direction for the entire market.

As the first Polish participant in the GDS-Index, Kraków demonstrated how benchmarking can be effectively used to transform a destination. In the 2025 edition, the city achieved a score of 62.2%, improving its result by nearly 13 percentage points and climbing 19 places in the global ranking. Kraków also placed second in the *Most Improved Destination* category, confirming its dynamic progress in industry

collaboration, certification and social initiatives.

The year 2026 brought further groundbreaking developments. Kraków adopted the official *Recommendations for the Sustainable Organisation of Municipal Events*, becoming one of the first cities in Poland to introduce such comprehensive guidelines covering transport, catering, accessibility, participant well-being, reporting and CO_2 emission reduction.

Gdańsk is following an equally impressive path. The city is consistently developing initiatives related to accessibility and inclusive tourism, treating them as one of the pillars of its sustainable development strategy. During the *GDS Forum & Impact Day 2026*, the Gdańsk Tourism Organisation's project *"Nothing About Us Without Us"* received the international *Innovation Award* for its innovative approach to designing tourism services together with people with specific needs.

At the heart of the project is the active involvement of people with disabilities and people with diverse needs in the process of developing and evaluating the city's tourism offering. Rather than designing solutions for these groups, Gdańsk develops them together with the people concerned. The programme includes, among other things, accessibility audits of tourist attractions, venues and urban spaces, the development of recommendations for the tourism industry, and the creation of communication tools that facilitate travel and stay planning. As a result, accessibility becomes not only an obligation, but also a mark of quality and a destination's competitive advantage.

For several years, Gdańsk has also been building its position as a leader in accessible and inclusive tourism by developing solutions that address the needs of people with disabilities, seniors, families with children and neurodivergent individuals. The city demonstrates that accessibility is not limited to removing architectural barriers, but also encompasses communication, the way tourism experiences are designed, and fostering a sense of safety and comfort for all visitors. This approach is increasingly regarded as one of the key elements of a modern and responsible destination.

In 2026, Szczecin not only joined the ranks of Poland's most active sustainable destinations, but also became the first Polish host of the *GDS Forum & Impact Day*, the world's leading event dedicated to sustainability in destinations and the meetings industry. During the event, Szczecin was also named *GDS Forum & Impact Day Partner of the Year 2026*, while the forum itself brought together representatives of destinations, convention bureaux and experts from around the world.

Wrocław adds another crucial dimension to the Polish conversation on sustainability: a focus on event participants. It is becoming increasingly clear that responsible events are not solely about the environment, reducing emissions or managing waste. It is equally important to design meetings in ways that support participants' well-being, accessibility, cognitive comfort and quality of experience.

Wrocław consistently advances this philosophy both through its membership of the GDS-Index and by initiating new formats for dialogue about the future of the meetings industry. A good example was the *RE_MIND 2026* congress held in June, which brought together experts in human-centred event design. The discussions addressed, among other topics, sensory comfort, neuroinclusion, accessibility, participants' mental health, and the creation of spaces that foster genuine engagement and knowledge exchange.



This approach is fully aligned with the latest global trends, in which the success of an event is measured not only by the number of participants or economic indicators, but also by the quality of the experience, a sense of belonging and safety, and the event's tangible impact on participants' development.

Wrocław demonstrates that the future of sustainable events lies in harmoniously combining care for the environment, the local community and the individual at the heart of every meeting.

It is no coincidence that this direction was also among the topics presented by Polish cities during the *GDS Forum & Impact Day 2026 in Szczecin.* There, the Poland Convention Bureau, together with Kraków, Gdańsk, Szczecin and Wrocław, demonstrated that modern destinations are increasingly shifting from thinking about the event itself to focusing on the participant experience. This is one of the most important changes currently taking place in the global meetings industry.

From benchmarking to collaboration

However, one of the most inspiring developments of recent years is not simply the presence of Polish cities in international rankings, but the way they collaborate with one another. Kraków, Gdańsk, Wrocław and Szczecin compete for congresses, conferences and international events while actively sharing their experiences, learning together from global leaders at GDS-Movement, and developing solutions that strengthen Poland's overall position.

In March 2025, representatives of Kraków, Gdańsk, Wrocław and Szczecin met during the *Regenerating Polish Destinations: Sustainable Tourism in Action* workshops led by GDS-Movement experts. This resulted in the development of a joint cooperation plan for 2025–2026.

As the Poland Convention Bureau of the Polish Tourism Organisation, we were proud to help to shape this process. Today, we can clearly see that **Polish cities are beginning**

to operate according to a model that can be described as coopetition – simultaneous cooperation and healthy competition. Together, they are building market capabilities, sharing experiences and demonstrating that the success of one destination strengthens Poland's position as a whole.

New projects, new opportunities

The transformation towards sustainable tourism is not taking place solely at the city level; it requires the involvement of the entire industry ecosystem, including tourism, catering and hospitality businesses, as well as the broader service supply chain.

In 2026, the Szczecin Convention Bureau launched the *Certification Support Programme*, enabling businesses to obtain financial and expert assistance in implementing certifications such as Green Key and Good Travel Seal.

At the same time, the Polish Conference and Congress Association launched the nationwide *Sustainable Congresses and Events* project, aimed at preparing the industry for ESG reporting and creating a self-certification system for the Polish meetings sector. **The programme includes:**

10 specialised ESG courses
training for approximately 200 organisations
preparation for Green Key certification
development of a self-assessment platform
creation of the *Spotlight on Green Poland* catalogue, showcasing verified sustainable conference venues

At the same time, the Polish Tourism Organisation is developing a national destination certification programme based on the GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council) criteria, laying the foundation for a future system for assessing and developing Polish cities and regions.

Destination Poland Green Academy – support for cities embarking on transformation

All these initiatives provided an important starting point for the *Destination Poland Green Academy* project.

While the GDS Forum and cooperation with Kraków, Gdańsk, Wrocław and Szczecin created a space for sharing experiences among Poland's transformation leaders, **the Destination Poland Green Academy was aimed primarily at cities that are only beginning this journey.**

From November 2025 to June 2026, we visited Bydgoszcz, Katowice, Kielce, Lublin, Łódź and Poznań, engaging more than 150 representatives of local authorities, convention bureaux, hotels, event organisers, conference venues, tourist attractions and industry organisations.

Together with **SITE Poland experts Grażyna Grot-Duziak and Beata Koziarska**, we demonstrated how local resources can be used to build a competitive advantage, how to design events in line with ESG principles, and how to create partnerships that strengthen entire destinations.

The project also demonstrated something even more important:
Polish cities and regions are not starting from scratch!

Many of them already have valuable social, environmental and educational initiatives in place. Often, these initiatives simply need to be properly defined, structured and incorporated into a coherent destination development strategy. ***Destination Poland Green Academy*** **helped identify these activities and demonstrated that cities outside the GDS-Index can also successfully build their position through sustainability.**

We are therefore pleased to present this e-book, which is not only a summary of the project but, above all, a guide to good practice and a source of inspiration, showcasing solutions already implemented by Polish cities and the meetings industry. We believe that future editions of the GDS-Index will include more Polish participants and that the experiences of Kraków, Gdańsk, Wrocław and Szczecin will provide an impetus for the continued development of regional destinations. The Poland Convention Bureau of the Polish Tourism Organisation, together with industry organisations such as SITE Poland and SKKP, will continue to support this process.



The future of Poland's meetings industry is not being shaped in individual cities. It is being built through collaboration across the entire sector, whose growing confidence shows that Poland can become one of Europe's leading sustainable destinations.

1 DESTINATION POLAND GREEN ACADEMY PROJECT CONCEPT

1.1. About the project

Destination Poland Green Academy is a nationwide educational and development programme **that ran from August 2025 to June 2026,** aimed at supporting the sustainable development of the meetings industry through knowledge sharing, the presentation of good practices and cooperation between local stakeholders.

An inclusive project supporting the development of regions and cities

From the outset, one of the key principles of **Destination Poland Green Academy** was to create a project accessible to the entire MICE industry – including cities and regions that are less frequently selected to host nationwide educational and promotional initiatives. Destinations described as "second- and third-choice cities" were deliberately selected – places with significant potential that are not always represented in international cooperation networks and are not yet among the most recognisable meetings destinations.

The project was inclusive and development-oriented, aimed not only at sharing knowledge about sustainability, but above all at building the capacity of local communities, strengthening cooperation between MICE industry representatives, local authorities, convention bureaux and local partners, and encouraging the adoption of good practices tailored to each region's specific character.

Destination Poland Green Academy demonstrated that the development of sustainable business tourism should not focus exclusively on the largest urban centres. Poland has many valuable destinations that, thanks to their cultural heritage, local products, community engagement and authentic experiences, can successfully build a competitive offering for the meetings market.

The project also highlighted the role of events as a tool for regional development. Conferences, congresses, industry events and local festivals not only generate tangible economic benefits, but also build social capital, strengthen a place's identity and increase its visibility. However, for this impact to be lasting, events should form part of a destination's long-term development strategy rather than being one-off initiatives.

Another important element in building a strong regional brand is the creation of a unique narrative based on the authentic distinguishing features of a place, its history, culture, natural environment and local traditions. Coherent storytelling, supported by events and consistent communication, helps to build an attractive and credible destination image in both domestic and international markets.

Destination Poland Green Academy demonstrated that investing in knowledge, cooperation and the development of regional destinations is an investment in the future of Poland's entire meetings industry. Building up smaller centres's potential increases Poland's competitiveness as a sustainable MICE destination and supports a more balanced development of the events market throughout the country.

The project is based on the belief that the development of responsible business tourism requires the involvement of the entire destination ecosystem – from convention bureaux, hotels and event venues to service providers, local authorities and event organisers.

1.2. Key project assumptions and goals

The project was based on three global frameworks:

The UN 2030 Agenda (17 Sustainable Development Goals)

ESG standards in the events industry

SITE Poland Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto

The project pursued four main objectives:

1. **Education** – developing industry expertise in sustainability and responsible event organisation.
2. **Stakeholder integration** – fostering dialogue and cooperation between representatives of the MICE industry, local authorities, convention bureaux and local suppliers.
3. **Development of local offer** – identifying and promoting regional resources, products and experiences aligned with the principles of sustainability.
4. **Regional cooperation** – creating lasting partnerships that will support the development of competitive and responsible destinations.

1.3. Programme pillars

A series of six educational workshops

The workshop programme was designed to combine expert knowledge with practical examples and active participant involvement. As a result, each of the six workshops became a space for collaboration, inspiration and the joint exploration of solutions addressing the challenges faced by today's industry. The workshops were held in six selected Polish cities/regions and included:

- Exploring practical sustainability solutions in the MICE industry
- Presentations of local good practices and initiatives
- Group work on preparing a proposal for a specific RFP
- Sharing experiences and building a local cooperation network
- Local industry discussion

Green Talks

Interviews with selected participants, experts and representatives of local workshop partners. The interviews present:

- Good practices
- Inspiring initiatives
- The outcomes of implementing sustainability solutions
- Local stories and experiences

The interviews are published on **www.sitepoland.com** and on social media, including the SITE Poland and Destination Poland profiles on LinkedIn and Facebook.

Responsible Incentive Travel Day 2026, SITE Poland

A session prepared and led by the Poland Convention Bureau.

Hospitality 2.0 session – building a competitive advantage through accessibility and a participant-centred approach. **How conscious experience design can become a driving force behind the growth of the entire meetings and tourism industry**.

The session demonstrated that inclusivity is neither a passing trend nor merely an element of CSR activities. It is the foundation of a **modern destination** – open, flexible and consciously designed to address participants' diverse needs. **A sound bath took place during the session,** allowing RITD participants to experience human-centred design in practice.

A special element complementing the session was the presentation of the **PCB PTO Low-Sensory Showroom** concept – a space designed to provide calm, recovery and a moment to recharge before upcoming sessions or business meetings – as well as an **AI workshop for the incentive industry and corporate buyers** (the use of AI in designing sustainable programmes, personalisation, communication and process optimisation), prepared by the **Poland Convention Bureau Creators' Lab.**

Educational e-book

A publication summarising the DPGA project, containing:

- Conclusions from the workshops
- Expert recommendations
- Case studies

Examples of local initiatives

Participants' recommendations for top MICE attractions

Practical tools supporting the implementation of sustainability principles in the meetings industry

1.4. Project leadership team

The project was delivered by a team of experts with many years of experience in the MICE industry, the implementation and promotion of sustainable events and incentive travel, and destination marketing.



Aneta Książek
Director of the Poland Convention Bureau / Polish Tourism Organisation
Honorary Member of SITE Poland

In the Polish MICE industry, Aneta is strongly associated with the Polish Tourism Organisation, where she has worked since 2008, actively promoting Poland and supporting the development of the meetings industry.

In recognition of her achievements, she has received the MP Power Awards distinction three times (2013, 2020 and 2023), as well as the honorary badge "For Services to Tourism", awarded by the Minister of Sport and Tourism (2016). Since 7 June 2021, she has been an honorary member of SITE Poland; since January 2024, a member of the MPI Poland Chapter; and since April 2025, an honorary member of the Polish Conference and Congress Association.

On behalf of the Polish Tourism Organisation's Poland Convention Bureau, she served on the local organising committee of the 61st ICCA Congress in Kraków (6–9 November 2022). She was also the only Polish judge in the international UN Women USA Rise and Raise Others Award 2022 competition, which honours outstanding women for their commitment and enthusiasm in supporting others in achieving the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

In February 2024, as Head of the Poland Convention Bureau, she received a prestigious award for her outstanding contribution to the development of the meetings and events

industry. During the Conventa Trade Show 2024 in Slovenia, she received two major Meetings Star awards: *The Most Influential People in New Europe: Top Meeting Architects*, in recognition of her innovative approach and leadership in shaping the Polish meetings industry, and the top award, *Dreamcatcher of the Year 2023/2024*, for her exceptional contribution to promoting Poland internationally as a meetings destination.

In April 2024, she won the fifth-anniversary edition of the Vistula Compasses competition, receiving the Vistula Compass in the Open category. In 2025, she became the first person from Central Europe to receive the international Paul Flackett IMEX Academy Award. She is one of 139 international contributors to the book "Ensemble: From Solo to Symphony", released on 8 March 2025, International Women's Day, during the prestigious SXSW event in Austin.



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MICE Expert
President of SITE Poland, 2017–23 / Adviser to the SITE Poland Board since 2024

Grażyna has over 40 years of experience in the tourism industry, specialising in business and incentive tourism (MICE). Since 2022, she has run her own consultancy, MICE Expert, focused on business tourism.

She is a two-time winner of the nationwide MP Power 12 industry competition in the Power People – Incentive Agency category (2018 and 2020 editions). In 2022, 2023 and 2024, she was included in the list of the 100 most influential people in Polish tourism, published as part of a ranking organised by the Wasza Turystyka website.

She has been actively involved in SITE Poland since 2017, successively serving as Vice-President, President and, currently, Adviser to the Board. She is an advocate of sustainable tourism and initiated SITE Poland's "Our Impact on People, Society and the Planet" project, as well as Responsible Incentive Travel Day, three editions of which (2024, 2025 and 2026) she personally coordinated. She also hosts a series of educational interviews on sustainability entitled Green Talks and co-authored the Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto.

In 2025–2026, she served as a co-creator and trainer in the Destination Poland Green Academy training project, commissioned by SITE Poland and the Polish Tourism Organisation / Poland Convention Bureau. She supports the development of young professionals in the tourism industry as a mentor and educator in the SITE Poland Young Leaders programme and actively participates in the work of the Business Council of the Vistula School of Hospitality.



Beata Koziarska
EMOVEO GROUP
Vice-President of SITE Poland, 2024–25 / SITE Poland Audit Committee, 2026–27

Beata has been involved in the business and incentive travel industry for over 30 years, working as an adviser, versatile manager and business practitioner with extensive professional experience.

In 2006, she planned her first incentive programme incorporating CSR elements in Turkey, guided by the principle of "give instead of take". Since then, she has actively promoted responsible tourism, translating sustainability principles into business practice and drawing inspiration from leading Polish and international practices.

Since 2022, she has been an active member of SITE Poland, contributing to the Sustainability & CSR project *"Our Impact on People, Society and the Planet"*. As part of this initiative, she co-creates the educational interview series "Green Talks", showcasing good practices in the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Since 2024, she has co-created three consecutive editions of the *Responsible Incentive Travel Day Conference* – a SITE Poland educational project dedicated to responsible tourism. She also co-authored the *SITE Poland Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto* and served as a co-creator and trainer of *Destination Poland Green Academy* training project (2025–2026), which she delivered as a SITE Poland expert on behalf of the Polish Tourism Organisation / Poland Convention Bureau.

She is passionate about supporting the development of Poland's MICE tourism industry, combining expert knowledge with active participation in industry debates and discussions that promote Polish cities and regions as exceptional business and event destinations.

Key responsibilities

- Preparing the programme content
- Facilitating the workshops
- Moderating discussions and breakout group work

Creating educational materials

Documenting project outcomes and insights

Coordinating cooperation with regional partners

1.5. Working framework: Methodology and approach to sustainability

The Destination Poland Green Academy project was based on a practical **learning-by-doing** approach, combining expert knowledge with the exchange of experiences and workshop activities. The programme was designed to inspire participants to implement practical sustainability solutions in their everyday operations.

The organisers ensured that each workshop brought together a diverse group of participants, including representatives of various organisations – both organisers and suppliers within the MICE industry. Active participant engagement and the creation of opportunities for cooperation between different industry stakeholders were key elements of the programme.

Each workshop included:

discussion of the principles of the UN 2030 Agenda and their relevance to event organisation

presentation of global trends, client requirements and expectations, and the current challenges facing the MICE and tourism industries

presentation of the practical aspects of designing sustainable events with consideration for environmental, social and economic factors

presentation of SITE Global and SITE Poland's activities in CSR & Sustainability

discussion of surveys completed by participants regarding the involvement of the

organisations they represented in implementing ESG principles

presentation and discussion of the SITE Poland Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto – 10 pillars and a practical set of guidelines for organisers

presentation of local good practices and case studies prepared by the participants

teamwork to develop a sustainable event proposal

a moderated discussion on the region's potential, cooperation between local stakeholders and barriers to implementing sustainability solutions

The role of local partners

An important element of the project was the active involvement of regional partners. Each workshop was co-created with local convention bureaux, hotels, conference venues, tourism organisations and industry representatives, who shared their own experiences and good practices.

This enabled participants to explore specific examples of implementing ESG and sustainability principles in the regions, as well as to jointly develop solutions tailored to local needs and potential. This approach fostered shared responsibility for destination development and strengthened cooperation between local authorities, the meetings industry and local businesses.

Sustainable workshop organisation – leading by example

As part of **Destination Poland Green Academy**, every effort was made to ensure that sustainability principles were not merely the subject of discussions and exercises, but became part of the way the project itself was organised. Therefore, each of the six workshops was planned according to the principle of **"practice what you preach" – leading by example**.

When selecting workshop venues, consideration was given not only to their location and

functionality, but also to their approach to sustainability. Venues were selected based on the tangible measures they had implemented, including reducing resource consumption, adopting a responsible approach to catering, managing waste and cooperating with local suppliers.

The event's branding materials, including mini roll-up banners and table signs, were designed to be sufficiently versatile for reuse throughout the multi-month training series. Supporting materials were displayed digitally on additional monitors or made available online via QR codes or email. During the training sessions, the audio-visual equipment available at each venue was used.

The project team's mode of transport also reflected this philosophy. Wherever possible, the trainers leading the workshops **travelled to the venues by train, thereby reducing the environmental footprint associated with transport.**

Particular attention was paid to catering. Breakfasts and coffee breaks were planned to accommodate participants' diverse dietary needs, including those following a vegetarian diet. The organisers also wanted the food to support concentration and well-being during intensive workshop activities. The menu therefore included **"brain food" – snacks and nutritional options designed to sustain focus, energy and cognitive performance**.

This was an important element of the project methodology. The organisers wanted to demonstrate to participants that sustainable MICE does not begin only when the main event starts. **It begins at the decision-making stage: where we meet, how we get there, what we serve and who we work with.**

In this way, every Destination Poland Green Academy workshop provided not only an opportunity to gain knowledge, but also **a practical example of responsible event design**.













The Destination Poland Green Academy project demonstrated that sustainability is not merely a collection of good practices, but a way of thinking about destination development based on partnership, responsibility and the co-creation of value for local communities, the industry and event participants.

2 DESTINATION POLAND GREEN ACADEMY WORKSHOPS – FROM INSPIRATION TO CO-CREATING SOLUTIONS

2.1. Sustainability as a new standard

Each meeting began with a presentation introducing sustainability topics in business tourism and the MICE sector from both global and regional perspectives.

Participants explored global trends shaping the development of the MICE sector and the changing expectations of clients, who increasingly consider not only the quality of an event's programme, but also its social, environmental and economic impact.

Pillars of a sustainable event	
Environmental Pillar	Energy, water and paper conservation, plastic reduction, waste sorting and recycling, food waste mitigation, utilisation of public transportation
Social Pillar	Inclusivity, accessibility, workplace safety, far labor practices, active support for NGOs and local communities
Economic Pillar	Cost managment, short supply chains, sourcing local products, plant-based event décor, comprehensive digital transformation

Global trends in MICE
Key directions in the development of sustainable events

Technology	• hybrid and virtual events formats • mobile applications (registration, push notifications) • artificial intelligence (AI) integration • digitalisation of communication and event materials
Zero waste & circular economy	• waste minimisation strategy • eco- conscious measures implemented across every stage of the event lifecycle • circular economy proinciples • material recycling and upcycling
Certifications & standards	• Green Globe & Green Meetings • Green Key (for venues and hotels) • ISO 20121 standard compliance • Travelife certification
Reporting	• corporate requirements and ESG alignment • precise carbon footprint measurement • financial and resource savings evaluation • verifiable impact indicators

Client requirements and expectations

Driven by generational shifts among buyers and decision-makers across local, regional, and global events

- **Strict 'Green' Criteria in Tenders and RFPs –** Mandatory compliance with environmental and sustainability standards from the Request-for-Proposal (RFP) stage.
- **CSR as a Core Event Element –** Seamless integration of Corporate Social Responsibility directly into event objectives
- **Environmental Reports and ESG guidelines –** Precise carbon footprint measurement, metric tracking, iand quantitive impact assessments
- **Certifications and Implemented ESG policies –** Robust supporting documentation, recommendations, client testimonials, and adherence to verifiable benchmarks

Sustainable events – Benefits for Organisers
Key business and brand-building values for agencies and event creators

- **Lower operating costs –** implementing zero-waste and circular-economy pactices, upcycling materials and optimising overall resource consumption.
- **Greater Participant Engagement –** Meeting the expectations of younger demographics, incorporating active CSR initiatives into agendas, and measuring impact through post-event feedback
- **Enhanced Brand Reputation –** Building organisational credibility, increasing appeal to corporate sponsors, and unlocking ESG-focused strategic partnerships
- **Competitive advantage –** Establishing a Unique Selling Proposition (USP), creating clear market differentiation, and defining modern service standards in MICE

Sustainable events – benefits for destinations
Impact on host city, regions and national markets

- **Attractinf Eco-conscious clients –** Sustainable events tenders attract premium corporate clients and elevate international destination prestige
- **Stronger Market Position –** Enhanced regional positioning, expanded access to high-value tender opportunities, and a strong USP for the regional economy

- **Local Economic Growth –** Creating an inclusive urban environment for residents while directly driving business to local suppliers
- **Long-term Development Strategy –** Building resilient business ecosystem and infrastructure rather than relying on isolated, one-off initiatives.
- **Future- Proofing Investments –** Continuously improving residents' quality of life and strengthening environmental competitiveness

2.2. The UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals - a universal framework for MICE

The UN's **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** constitute the 2030 Agenda fos Sustainable Development adopted at the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.

In preparation for the practical workshops sessions, the principles of the SDGs were presented to illustrate to illustrate how event planning and delivery directly advance goals such as responsible consumption and production, climate action, local community development, strategic partnerships, and overall human well-being.

Demonstrating that even a single event can make a tangible contribution to many of these goals – from responsible resourse usage to local communities engagement, to climate action and partnerships for achieving the goals. This enabled participants to consider their activities not only from the perspective of an individual event, but also in terms of their impact on achieving the global Sustainable Development Goals.



source: https://www.un.org/pt/teach/SDGs

2.3. The SITE Poland Manifesto as the programme's foundation

Following the SDG's overview, participants explored the **SITE Poland Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto**. Thissegment was introduced wit an overview of **SITE Global,** its educational mission and **SITE Poland's** CSR & Sustainability initiatives.



The **Manifesto created by SITE Poland members** (Dorota Cholewa, Grażyna Grot-Duziak, Beata Koziarska, Emilia Kubik and Grażyna Łukaszyk) provides actionable, universal recommendations for event planners, venues, destinations and suppliers across the incentive and MICE sectors.

Originally launched alongside the 2nd edition of the Responsible Incentive Travel Day conference (2025), the workshop demonstrated practical ways to implement the Manifesto's 10 pillars to design responsible events and boost the international competitiveness of Polish destinations.



The Manifesto is not merely a collection of good practices, but a recommendation for implementing modern management, building competitive advantage and creating lasting value for all stakeholders.

10 Pillars of the SITE Poland Manifesto

1.Establish Sustainable Action Strategies

- Treat sustainability as a core business strategy, not an add-on
- Define measurable ESG goals, localisation, inclusivity, zero waste)
- Engage teams and partners in strategy co-creation,
- Monitor progress annually, and communicate transparently to build client trust

2.Work with Responsible Partners

- Develop a supplier code of conduct for venues, hotels, and transport providers
- Partner with certified local entities, verify ethical and environmental practices in contracts,
- maintain transparent financial terms
- promote partners committed to best practices



3.Plan Eco-Logistics

- Minimise transport by choosing well-connected destinations
- Prioritise public transit, electric vehicles, and walkable routes
- Select co-located venues to reduce transfers,
- Offset remaining emissions locally (e.g., tree planting),
- Digitise logistics to cut printed materials



4.Choose Eco-Certified Hotels & Restaurants

- Select venues with recognised certifications (Green Key, ISO 14001, Travelife)
- Support seasonal, farm-to-table dining
- Strictly audit waste, energy, single-use plastics, and food management policies
- Partner with venues that donate surplus food to local charities
- Promote plant- based menus to lower environmental impact



5.Design Programmes Locally

- Work with local guides, artisans, and suppliers
- Collaborate with regional Convention & Visitors Bureaux (CVBs) for authentic, non-commercial cultural experiences
- Structure itineraries to directly boost the local economy and integrate educational elements covering local history, culture, and community context



6.Act Ethically

- Eliminate activities that infringe upon human rights or animal welfare
- Work exclusively with ethical, equity-focused partners
- Respect local heritage without trivialising culture,
- avoid ecosystem degradation, ensure animal interactions are restricted to wild observation or accredited sanctuaries,
- educate attendees on cultural and environmental respect



7.Digitise Communication

- Replace paper with dynamic event apps updated in real time
- Utilise QR codes and interactive digital tools for agendas, surveys, feedback, and certifications.
- Transition physical event giveaways into digital value (e-books, access vouchers, premium content)
- Offer tech-support to ensure accessibility for all participants



8.Integrate CSR into Event Agendas

- Prioritise genuine social and environmental impact over superficial PR
- Focus on meaningful, scalable actions (even 1-hour community projects) in partnership with local NGOs, schools, or sanctuaries
- Align CSR with the client's ESG strategy to create lasting relationships
- Report results in transparent, human terms



9.Educate and Inspire Participants

- Communicate sustainability goals early and clearly
- Utilise experiential learning so key insights resonate deeply
- Lead by example as event organisers,
- Foster emotional connection,
- Rely on concrete metrics (reduced, waste diverted, trees planted) rather than marketing slogans



10. **Be Proactive as Organisation**

- Actively persuade corporate clients to adopt sustainable incentive travel practices
- Focus on genuine client needs
- Deliver tailored, eco-conscious solutions at every step of event lifecycle



The full text of the MANIFESTO and recommendations for organisers can be found here: https://sitepoland.com/en/manifesto-site-poland/



TASK

Consider which principles of the Manifesto resonate with you and which you have already implemented when planning and delivering events

2.4. Initial survey results – identifying challenges to drive solutions

The workshop incorporated an analysis of pre-event registration survey data gathered from MICE professionals. **This research identified primary barriers to sustainability adoption, measured current industry knowledge, and pinpointed key areas requiring educational support.**

Consequently, the workshop discussions were based on the market's actual needs, while participants could compare their own experiences with the observations of representatives from other regions of Poland.

2.5. Local inspiration – regional best practices. Presentations of local case studies and good practices

Across each host city, designated participants presented regional case studies structured around a standardized framework. These presentations demonstrated that such measures can be successfully implemented regardless of organisation size or operation scope

Featured Case Studies Highlighted:

- Direct cooperation with local producers and regional suppliers
- Integration of regional cultural and culinary heritage into event programming
- Targeted operational measures to reduce environmental footprints
- Community-driven initiatives uniting residents, local NGO's and universities
- Dedicated attendee well-being and health-focused solutions
- Pioneering sustainability programs led by hotels, venues, and Convention Bureaux

Each of these experiences demonstrated that responsible action does not require a revolution; rather, it often begins with conscious, daily decisions. The animated discussion and Q&A following each presentation highlighted a compelling desire to exchange ideas, initiatives, and achievements. Furthermore, it provided valuable encouragement for those taking their initial steps towards sustainability.

2.6. Collaborative design of the events of the future

A core workshop component involved breakout team sessions where participants collaborated to design full-scale, sustainable event concepts.

Teams developed tailored proposals across diverse formats, including international corporate incentive trips, industry conferences, executive meetings, and team-building programs. Each team analysed the potential of its region/city and sought to answer the question of how to create an event that would be commercially attractive while remaining socially and environmentally responsible.

The workshops quickly turned into a creative, collaborative process. Participants from across the industry—including hotels, Convention Bureaux, DMCs, event organisers, tourist attractions, and public institutions—exchanged experiences and co-created local solutions that no single organisation could have developed on its own.

When creating their proposals, participants used guidance developed by the facilitators: a Project Manager's RFP checklist and a Sustainable Event proposal template.

These documents can be downloaded here:

CHECK LIST
SUSTAINABLE EVENT OFFER TEMPLATE

Each group presented its work to all participants during a joint wrap-up session. The resulting concepts stood out for their practical quality, creativity, and readiness for real-world implementation.

TASK

Using the documents, create your ideal sustainable MICE project

2.7. Outcomes extending beyond the workshop

One of the most valuable outcomes of the workshops was the identification of each region's local assets. Comprehensive lists were created, featuring venues, products, attractions, partners, and initiatives that can serve as a foundation for future incentive programmes and business events hosted in Poland

The exchange of experiences among participants was an equally significant outcome. The group work demonstrated that sustainability in the MICE sector is achieved primarily through collaboration and a shared openness to learning. Participants not only shared their own expertise but also drew inspiration from one another, building a professional network based on shared values.



It was precisely this diversity of perspectives and local experiences that generated practical solutions for future events and incentive projects.

Participants left the workshops with more than just new knowledge and a certificate of attendance. Above all, they gained actionable ideas, valuable business contacts, and the clear understanding that sustainability is not a limitation, but an opportunity to create more engaging, authentic, and competitive events.
Ultimately, the workshops proved that collaboration, openness, and knowledge sharing build not only better events, but also a stronger and more responsible MICE industry.

3 DESTINATION POLAND GREEN ACADEMY

6 regions, 6 platforms for collaboration and discussion, 6 sources of inspiration for sustainable business tourism



Workshop schedule



Workshop agenda

08:45 – 09:30	Morning coffee, registration, breakfast	—
09:30 – 09:35	Welcome and introduction to the project's objectives	*Aneta Książek*
09:35 – 09:50	Sustainable events – definitions, pillars, the UN's 17 Goals, global trends, client and participant expectations, and benefits for organisers and destinations	*Grażyna Grot-Duziak*
09:50 – 10:10	SITE Poland – presentation and the Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto	*Beata Koziarska*
10:20 – 10:25	Survey – summary of results	*Grażyna Grot-Duziak*
10:25 – 10:45	Participant presentations - good practices in sustainability	*Participants*
10:45 – 11:00	Break, coffee, networking	—
11:00 – 12:30	Interactive workshop: Planning and creating a sustainable proposal • Allocation of tasks • Work in teams of 5–6 people • Presentation of group-work results to all participants	*All participants*
12:30 – 12:50	Industry discussion	*All participants*
12:50 – 13:00	Summary and presentation of certificates	

3.1. WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Bydgoszcz, 28.11.2025, Qubus Hotel

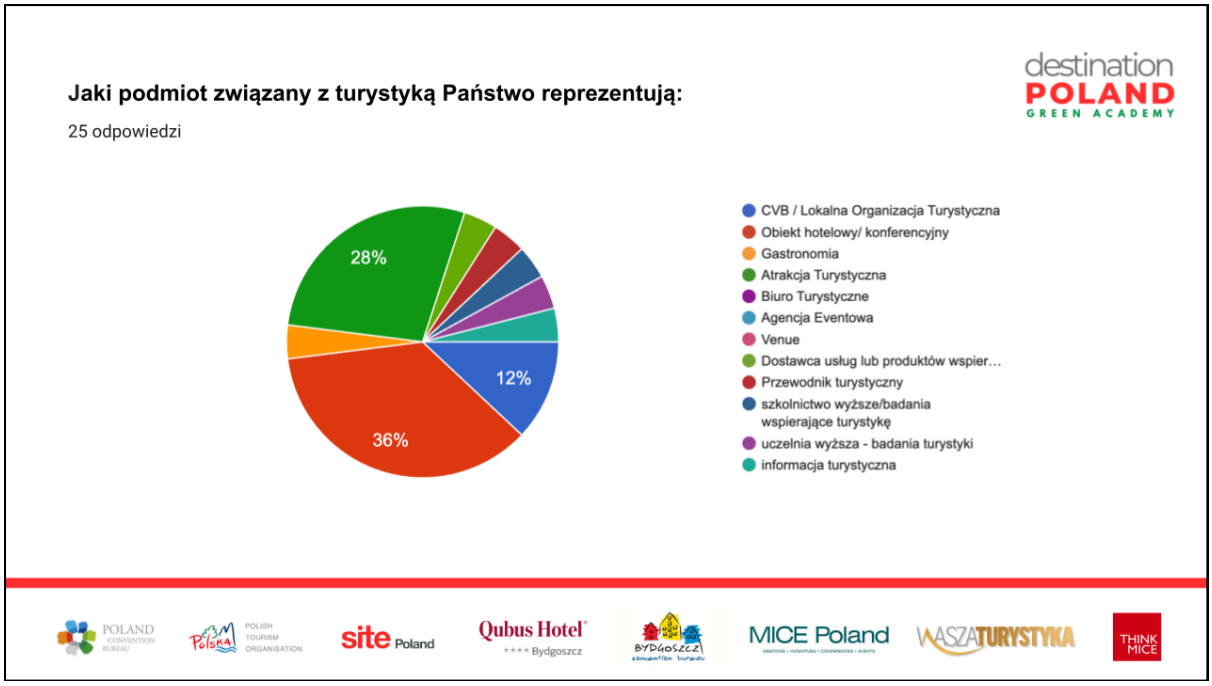


On 28 November 2025, Qubus Hotel in Bydgoszcz hosted **the inaugural workshop of the Destination Poland Green Academy project.**

The event convened 24 MICE industry representatives from **Bydgoszcz, Toruń and the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region,** representing hotels, conference and event venues, tourist attractions, event services providers and regional tourism development institution. Representatives of the **Bydgoszcz Convention Bureau – Leszek Woźniak** and **Paulina Lipska** – also attended the session.

Survey – data and key findings

The survey involved **25 participants representing various sectors of the tourism and MICE industries,** including hotels, conference venues, tourist attractions, tourism organisations, Convention Bureaux (CVBs), catering businesses, travel agencies, event agencies, universities, and tourism-related institutions. The participants' diverse backgrounds enabled the exploration of sustainability topics from multiple perspectives.



Key findings

- **76%** of respondents identified enhancing their organisation's brand image as one of the main benefits of implementing sustainability principles.
- **72%** recognise the potential to increase operational efficiency.
- **56%** indicated greater employee engagement, while **36%** highlighted potential cost reductions.
- **40%** of organisations undertake individual sustainability measures, while **28%** already implement specific initiatives.
- Only **20%** of organisations maintain a formal ESG policy, while **15%** are currently drafting one, and **55%** do not yet have a formal document.
- At the same time, as many as **65%** of respondents confirmed that their organisations undertake specific sustainability or ESG-related activities.

Most frequently implemented measures

Specific initiatives are dominated primarily by environmental measures and cooperation with the local community:

85%	Waste reduction, energy and water conservation and related environmental measures
85%	Collaboration with local suppliers and sourcing regional products
77%	Social initiatives focused on local communities
46%	Strategic planning and ESG reporting

Key conclusion

The regional tourism sector is progressively advancing towards sustainability, however, in many organisations, these efforts remain isolated initiatives rather than part of a comprehensive strategy.

Participants primarily recognise the practical and commercial benefits of ESG—improving reputation, boosting efficiency, cutting costs, and enhancing staff engagement. The main challenge remains transitioning from isolated, eco-focused actions to a structured, measurable, and reportable strategy.

In practice, this requires connecting environmental, community, and workplace initiatives with a formal ESG strategy backed by robust performance metrics. Moving from *"we are doing it"* to *"we know why and how we are doing it, and what results we achieve"* represents a crucial step for the ongoing development of sustainable tourism.

Good practices from the region

An engaging highlight of the programme was the presentation of inspiring case studies from the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, demonstrating demonstrating how responsible practices deliver a genuine competitive edge.

Featured presentations included:

- Initiatives by the **Toruń Raftsmen (Flisacy Toruńscy)**, leveraging the heritage of the Vistula River within the regional tourism offer
- Activities by **Modra Sova**, delivering environmental workshops and corporate eco-projects,
- Solutions implemented by **Hotel Bulwar** in Toruń focused on circular economy principles and environmental protection,
- The **Reskill Revolution** project led by WSG University in Bydgoszcz, building future-oriented green skills,
- The **Mental Tool Box** project by the Museum of Soap and History of Dirt in Bydgoszcz, promoting workplace well-being.

Case 1 **Sustainable tourism based on local assets – the Toruń Raftsmen.**
Presenter: Jakub Gołębiewski



Key conclusions and inspiration

- Sustainable tourism thrives by drawing upon authentic local assets: nature, history, heritage, and community engagement.
- The Toruń Raftsmen project shows that collaborating with regional suppliers and local partners builds a resilient service ecosystem while enhancing destination appeal.
- Environmental operation measures – reducing the carbon footprint, using low-emission solutions and minimising waste – align seamlessly with delivering high-quality participant experiences.
- Educational engagement and environmental awareness built through authentic Vistula River experiences represent vital project components.
- The example of the Toruń Raftsmen confirms that a destination's greatest potential lies in its existing assets and the ability to combine them creatively into a coherent tourism product.

Key conclusion

The core message is to shift perspective – seeking opportunities within existing local assets rather than focusing on perceived gaps. Local heritage, strong relationships, and active collaboration form the foundation of lasting, responsible tourism development.

Case 2 **Environmental education that engages and changes habits – ModraSova. Presenter: Aleksandra Kunowska**



Key take aways and inspiration

- **Experiential education delivers the best results.** Workshops based on practical activities – from upcycling and recycling to building insect hotels – effectively raise environmental awareness and encourage participants to adopt good practices in their daily lives.
- **ESG implementation can be highly engaging.** The project successfully combined environmental learning with well-being, team integration, and relationship-building.
- **Long-term cooperation creates lasting value.** Delivering three editions across five locations and 15 events confirms that a consistent initiative can become an integral part of organizational culture.
- **Diversity enhances educational outcomes.** Collaboration among people of different ages, backgrounds and levels of experience encourages knowledge sharing, integration and the development of responsible attitudes.

- **Consistency is essential for success.** Working with local partners, using eco-friendly materials, and taking a holistic approach ensures ESG activities remain authentic and credible.

Key conclusion

The example of ModraSova demonstrates that effective sustainability education does not end with a one-off event. It is a long-term process that uses engaging experiences to drive lasting changes in participants' attitudes and daily habits.

Case 3 — Sustainability begins with everyday decisions – Hotel Bulwar in Toruń. Presenter: Anna Urbańska



Key actions and conclusions

- **Investment in renewable energy** – installing photovoltaic panels and heat pumps reduced energy consumption and the venue's carbon footprint.
- **Process Digitalisation** – introducing electronic registration cards and reducing

printed materials lowered paper consumption and streamlined guest service.

- **Waste and plastic reduction** – adopting biodegradable packaging, eco-friendly cleaning agents, and eliminating single-use room amenities wherever feasible.
- **Circular economy practices** – partnering with food-saving platforms (*Too Good To Go*, *Foodsi*), reusing materials, and repurposing organic by-products such as coffee grounds and packaging.
- **Team engagement** – implementing waste segregation across all hotel departments and raising environmental awareness made sustainability part of daily corporate culture.
- **Cooperation with the local community** – implementing initiatives in partnership with local institutions and organisations strengthens the hotel's positive impact on the community and supports the development of the local economy.

Key conclusion

The Hotel Bulwar case study demonstrates that an effective sustainability strategy is combines green technology investments, daily operational discipline and active staff engagement. Consistency and the gradual implementation of numerous changes, operational improvements - even small ones - deliver lasting environmental, social and financial benefits.

Case 4

Green skills as the foundation of the tourism industry's future. WSG University in Bydgoszcz. Presenter: Magdalena Bergmann



Key actions and conclusions

- **Assessment of the tourism industry's skills needs**, involving entrepreneurs, managers and tourism sector partners from six European Union countries.
- **Recognition of "green skills" as one of three key areas of expertise**, alongside digital and social skills, essential for the development of a modern tourism industry.
- **Quantitative and qualitative research**, including surveys, interviews and strategic workshops with industry representatives, enabling the identification of actual market needs.
- **Development of an international e-learning platform** to support the development of practical skills among tourism and MICE sector employees.
- **Cooperation between universities, local authorities and businesses**, ensuring that the project addresses genuine market challenges and needs.
- **Green skills are becoming an increasingly important element of industry development**, although they are currently still perceived as less important than

social and digital skills.

- **Practical solutions offer the greatest value.** Entrepreneurs place the highest value on environmental skills that can be directly implemented in an organisation's daily operations and deliver tangible benefits.
- **Awareness of the impact of climate change on tourism is steadily increasing.** Industry representatives recognise both the risks posed by the climate crisis and new development opportunities, such as growing interest in *coolcation* destinations.
- **Skills development requires cooperation between multiple stakeholder groups.** Combining academic knowledge, business experience and the involvement of local authorities makes it possible to create solutions addressing the market's future challenges.

Key conclusion

Investing in education and professional upskilling is an investment in the resilience and competitiveness of the tourism sector, preparing the industry for evolving client expectations and sustainability requirements.

Case 5

Employee well-being as an element of sustainability – Museum of Soap and History of Dirt. Presenter: Daria Kieraszewicz

Co zrobiliśmy? – Praktyki zrównoważonego rozwoju

- W projekcie uwzględniono przede wszystkim filar społeczny zrównoważonego rozwoju
- W działanie zaangażowane było Muzeum Mydła wraz z pracownikami oraz profesjonalna Team Coach – Dorota Glaza
- W ramach projektu prowadziliśmy ankiety wśród pracowników, zorganizowaliśmy spotkania team buldingowe oraz stworzyliśmy „Mental Tool Box".



Key actions and conclusions

- **Placing employees' mental health at the heart of ESG initiatives** implemented as part of the international ETSM2030 project.
- **Conducting employee research and surveys** to better understand their needs and expectations.
- **Organising team-building meetings** to strengthen relationships, trust and communication within the team.
- **Developing the "Mental Tool Box"** – a practical set of tools supporting employees' mental well-being and daily functioning.
- **Obtaining the international Good Travel Seal certification**, confirming the organisation's commitment to implementing sustainability principles.
- **Sustainability is also about caring for people.** Initiatives focused on employees' mental well-being lead to greater engagement, better teamwork and increased job satisfaction.

- **Regular dialogue with the team makes it possible to respond more effectively to employees' actual needs.** Surveys and open conversations provide valuable information that helps create a more supportive working environment.
- **Building relationships is just as important as implementing tools.** Collaborative problem-solving and social activities reinforce trust and workplace belonging.
- **Results should be measured.** The increase in the employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) confirmed that the initiatives resulted in tangible improvements to the working atmosphere and the team's well-being.

Key conclusion

Prioritising staff well-being is an essential component of responsible management in the tourism and MICE sectors. Organisations that invest in their people build more resilient, motivated, and sustainable teams.

Results of the Group Breakout Sessions

Participants worked in breakout groups of 5–6 representatives spanning diverse tourism disciplines. Each team received a comprehensive brief requiring them to design a complete, sustainable event concept (selecting from a conference, executive meeting, corporate training session, team-building event, or international incentive trip).

Using guided criteria, teams developed detailed proposals featuring:

- Event title/theme and venue selection
- Core sustainability elements (location, eco-catering, materials, low-emission transport, CSR actions, and authentic attractions)
- Strategic keywords highlighting environmental and ESG differentiators

The teams successfully:

1. Structured full event plans incorporating sustainable event design principles.
2. Mapped regional assets to build the destination's competitive advantage.
3. Highlighted clear ESG differentiators.

Five original event concepts were created, each featuring distinct programmes, supplier selections, and local experiences.

TOP 5 Regional ttractions and products Recommended by workshop participants

Bydgoszcz – City of Rivers and the "Ster na Bydgoszcz" Fes Bydgoszcz has built its identity around the Brda River and the historic Bydgoszcz Canal, which played a key role in the city's development as an important centre of trade and transport. The best example is the annual **"Ster na Bydgoszcz" River Festival** – one of the region's largest outdoor events, attracting thousands of residents and tourists. This celebration of the city demonstrates how maritime heritage can be transformed into a modern tourism product and an inspiring backdrop for corporate events and incentive trips..

Rother's Mills – Industrial Heritage in a modern setting

The 19th-century **Rother's Mills** on Mill Island (*Wyspa Młyńska*), once among Europe's most advanced flour mills, have been revitalised into a modern Science and Culture Centre. Featuring flexible conference rooms, event spaces, a panoramic viewing deck, and a restaurant, it serves as an exemplary model of combining industrial heritage with modern MICE functionality.

Vistula Rafting Traditions – the Toruń Raftsmen

The **Toruń Raftsmen** project offers immersive river trips aboard traditional wooden vessels modelled on medieval craft. Introducing guests to river culture, skipper folklore, and local history, it provides a unique team-building experience combining active exploration, heritage, and education.

Museum of Soap and History of Dirt – Interactive Experience

One of the region's most distinctive attractions, the interactive **Museum of Soap and the History of Dirt** in Bydgoszcz presents the history of hygiene alongside hands-on-soap-making workshops. It offers an engaging, experience-based activity ideal for both incentive trips and corporate team-building itineraries.

Bydgoszcz's Iconic Event Venues & Floating Heritage

Bydgoszcz offers modern infrastructure for hosting business events. The **Opera Nova Congress Centre** features nine auditoriums accommodating up to **1,500 delegates**, with full technical and catering support. Meanwhile, the **Ignacy Jan Paderewski Pomeranian Philharmonic** provides prestigious spaces for concerts, galas and conferences, including an **850-seat concert hall**.

The Lemara Barge in Bydgoszcz, moored on the Brda waterfront next to the granaries and built in 1937, is a truly unique venue. It is a historic monument and a witness to the city's history and development. The barge provides an exclusive venue for private river cruises and storytelling sessions.

Local Regional Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas



The Kuyavian-Pomeranian region is home to many recognisable brands and products that can become part of incentive programmes and serve as original gifts for business event participants. Using local products not only enhances the authenticity of an event, but also supports regional businesses and promotes the region's culinary and craft heritage.

Among the most interesting options are:

Toruń Gingerbread – The region's iconic delicacy, suitable for elegant gifting, but also as the centrepiece of gingerbread-decorating workshops or culinary team-building activities.

Artisanal Soaps from Museum of Soap and History of Dirt – Handmade soaps or soap-making masterclasses are a unique and practical gift linked to one of Bydgoszcz's most original attractions.

Lower Vistula Valley Honey - Natural gift sets sourced from local apiaries, perfectly aligned with the principles of sustainability.

Kuyavian-Pomeranian Wines - Craft wines as well as regional fruit preserves and liqueurs made by local producers.

Maritime Crafts inspired by the Vistula and rafting traditions – Handcrafted wooden raft models, ceramic souvenirs, and artistic prints of Bydgoszcz and Toruń.

Summary & Expert - Moderated Panel

The Kuyavian-Pomeranian region demonstrates how river heritage, revitalised industrial architecture, interactive culture, and modern MICE infrastructure can create a compelling, authentic destination offer. Bydgoszcz and Toruń effectively leverage their natural and historical assets to build strong destination brands centered on water, history, and memorable delegate experiences.

Industry discussion moderated by experts

The meeting concluded with a discussion panel moderated by the facilitators.

The workshop's concluding discussion confirmed that the region's MICE industry recognises the growing need for cooperation, knowledge sharing and the joint development of sustainability-related expertise.

Participants concluded that the region's greatest strengths are its **people, local partnerships** and **ability to use the destination's unique assets.** These form the foundation of a competitive and sustainable offering for the meetings industry.

Key Panel conclusions

- Destinations that invest in ESG gain a competitive advantage and are selected more frequently in international tenders.
- Local examples demonstrate that **tangible ESG practices are already being implemented in the region** and are delivering measurable benefits – reputational, financial and social.
- The region's industry is open to developing expertise and cooperation to jointly create an attractive, responsible MICE offering.

- The animated closing discussion highlighted a clear demand for regular industry networking and knowledge-sharing platforms.
- The first ideas for an industry meeting have already emerged – a Christmas gathering at the Museum of Soap.













3.2. WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Kielce, 05.12.2025, Odyssey Club & Spa Hotel

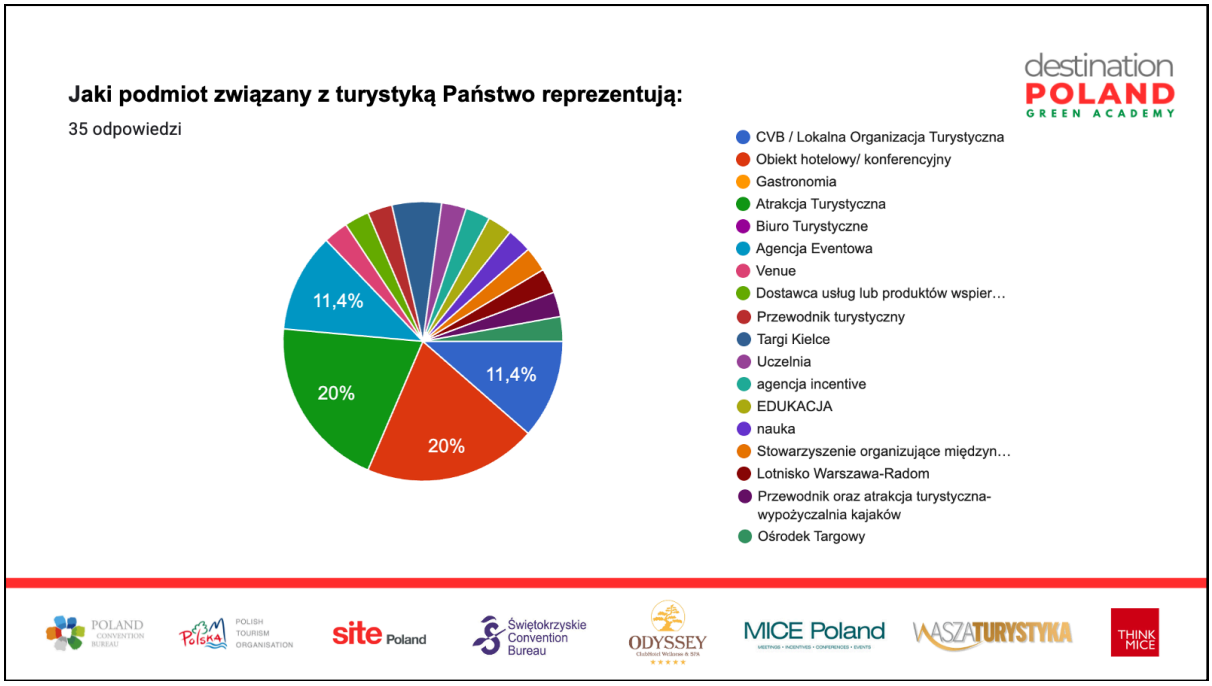


The meeting brought together 34 MICE sector representatives from the Świętokrzyskie region: spanning hotels, event venues, local attractions, service providers, Warsaw–Radom Airport and institutions supporting the development of business tourism.

Local authorities and the Convention Bureau were represented by: **Marcin Piętak**, Director of the Office of the Regional Tourism Organisation of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship; **Piotr Dwurnik** – Local Tourism and Hospitality Organisation of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains; **Magdalena Kowalczyk** – Regional Tourism Organisation; **Paweł Walczyszyn** – Świętokrzyskie Mountains Local Tourism Organisation; and **Katarzyna Kozłowska** – Świętokrzyskie Convention Bureau.

Survey – Data and Key Findings

The survey conducted among **35 participants in the Destination Poland Green Academy workshops** shows that sustainability is increasingly perceived as **a key driver of competitiveness and responsible management across tourism and the MICE sector**. The diversity of respondents – representing convention bureaux, hotels, tourist attractions, event organisers, local authorities and other market stakeholders – enabled the exploration of this topic from multiple perspectives.



Summary of Survey Findings

The primary conclusion is a **growing awareness of the commercial benefits arising from sustainability**. A striking **82.9% of respondents** cited building a positive organisation image, while **57.1%** identified increased operational efficiency. Easier access to financing (**45.7%**) and greater employee engagement (**42.9%**) were also highlighted as major advantages. Notably, **not a single respondent felt that sustainability offered no value to an organisation**.

Although more than **70%** of respondents reported initiating action or implementing dedicated measures, **formal ESG policies remain uncommon**. Only **4% of organisations have already implemented one**, while **48%** are still drafting one. This indicates that many organisations are actively transitioning from ad-hoc measures to a more structured, strategic approach.

Current initiatives focus primarily on **local community support and environemental protection – each cited by 77.8% of respondents. 55.6%** of organisations actively in protect cultural heritage, while **44.4%** undertake activities addressing global climate and environmental challenges.

Key conclusion

The local tourism and MICE industry recognises the vital importance of sustainability, but is still developing the necessary expertise and systemic solutions. The primary challenge is no longer convincing organisations *whether* action is worthwhile, but demonstrating **how to translate awareness into concrete measures, a strategy, measurable goals and a formal policy.**

Good Practices from the Region

An engaging highlight of the programme was the presentation of inspiring case studies from the Swiętokrzyskie Voivodeship, demonstrating how responsible practices deliver a genuine competitive edge.

Featured presentations included:

- **Lavender Ranch (*L**awendowe Ranczo).*** A unique venue located in the heart of the Sandomierz region, combining the beauty of nature, local traditions and the slow life philosophy..
- The founder of **WOWLAND – Polska Nieoczywista** - innovative travel concept designed for female travellers, rooted in local heritage and authentic regional assets of the Świętokrzyskie region.
- **“U Dorotki”** - A family business with over **15 years of experience**, passionately promoting the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship through active tourism and tour guide services.

Case 1

Sandomierz Provence. A place that transforms meetings into unique experiences
Lawendowe Ranczo. Presenter: Ewelina Borkowska



Key Takeaways and Inspiration

- **Lawendowe Ranczo** is an exceptional venue located in the heart of the Sandomierz region, combining the beauty of nature, local traditions and the concept of *slow life*. It was created for intimate events, team-building activities and relaxation close to nature.
- **Its offer for the MICE industry** centers on authentic, engaging experiences that allow participants to build meaningful relationships in an informal atmosphere. The programme includes, among other things, the **Lavender Picnic with wine and cheese, plantation tours, themed workshops, outdoor photography and painting sessions, and evening bonfires.**
- The venue is actively expanding its **well-being and regeneration offer by providing lavender horticultural therapy** and quiet relaxation spaces, addressing the growing demand for delegate well-being at business events.
- **One of Lawendowe Ranczo's key strengths is the largest lavender plantation in Sandomierz County**, covering approximately half a hectare of picturesque fields

on the slope of an old Vistula riverbed. It provides an exceptional setting for events, photo shoots and team-building activities.

- A core differentiator is its **family farming heritage dating back to 1926**, paired with genuine hospitality and close collaboration with local producers, artists, and artisans. This allows delegates to discover the region through its culture, flavours, and people.
- The offer continues to evolve, with future developments including boutique studio apartments, a team-building gazebo with an outdoor kitchen, mushroom-picking retreats with culinary masterclasses, and scenic walking/cycling routes.

Key conclusion

Lawendowe Ranczo demonstrates that boutique, local venues can successfully create a compelling offer for the MICE market. Blending nature, regional heritage, authentic experiences and the *slow life* philosophy makes it an inspiring example of a sustainable venue meeting modern event expectations.

Case 2

Sustainable Travel Revealing the Authentic Face of Poland – WOWland. Presenter: Majka Szura



Key conclusions and inspiration

- **WOWland** is an innovative project promoting regional Poland by designing unique tourism experiences based on sustainability, local identity and the *slow travel* philosophy.
- Operations are grounded in community collaboration, featuring visits to family-run eateries, agritourism farms, vineyards, small craft producers, and local artisans.
- **Environmental responsibility** is an important element of the projects. WOWland consistently applies zero-waste principles, uses biodegradable event materials, and runs practical waste-reduction workshops. These activities are complemented by active outdoor tourism, including *Green Velo* cycling routes, kayaking and horse riding.
- The project actively preserves and promotes **regional heritage**. Through social media, custom video content, publications and interviews with folk artists and local entrepreneurs, it highlights the history, culture and cuisine of the Świętokrzyskie region. All content is produced in-house, to guarantee message authenticity.
- An examplary product is **Lejdis Trip Świętokrzyskie** – a dedicated itinerary for

women responding to the conscious travel trendl. It combines unhurried sightseeing with craft workshops, aromatherapy, outdoor activities, vineyard visits, and meetings with local hosts. It serves as a model for tourism product built around emotions, relationships and the quality of experiences.

- The presentation also highlighted key regional growth challenges, including the need to strengthen the destination brand, upgrade premium infrastructure, improve transport logistics, create women-centric travel products, and promote high-potential locations.
- **The effectiveness of WOWland's activities is confirmed by industry recognition,** including an MP Power Awards nomination and Kreatywna Turystyka award. The project is also actively promoted at industry events and trade shows, building recognition of the region in both domestic and international markets.

Key conclusion

WOWland proves that sustainable tourism can can be both commercially successful and an effective promotional tool. By combining regional heritage, social responsibility, eco-awareness and authentic experiences, it delivers a modern tourism offer that resonates with today's travellers and corporate buyers.

Case 3

Active Recreation in Harmony with Nature and Community – Kayaking Trips „U Dorotki". Presenter: Dorota Czesak

- Nasza wypożyczalnia dysponuje 54 kajakami jesteśmy więc w stanie obsłużyć jednocześnie ponad 100 osób w każdym wieku (nasz najmłodszy kajakarz miał 6 tygodni, najstarszy 90 lat, psi przyjaciele pożądani).
- Na przystani „U Dorotki" mamy 2 miejsca na ogniska, ze stołami i ławami dla 100 osób, prywatny teren do wypoczynku z plażą bezpośrednio nad Nidą, parking, kosze na śmieci, w sezonie letnim serwisowaną toaletę typu Toi Toi, przenośny agregat prądotwórczy.
- Organizujemy imprezy integracyjne od urodzin, pikników dla rodzin po rekolekcje w kajaku i biwaki pod namiotem.
- Przystań „U Dorotki" znajduje się w Obszarze Natura 2000 Dolina Nidy. Wyposażenie obiektu i organizacja wypoczynku są dostosowane do wymogów ochrony przyrody na tym terenie.



Key Takeaways and inspiration

- The offer caters to leisure travellers, families, organised groups, and the MICE market, combining outdoor recreation, relaxation, team integration, and nature exploration to discover the region's natural attractions.
- **The marina's infrastructure** easily handles large corporate groups. Equipped with **54 kayaks,** it accommodates over **100 participant**s simultaneously. On-site amenities include dedicated bonfire pits, a private beach along the Nida River, recreational areas, and grounds for picnics, camping, and outdoor team building.
- A particular distinguishing feature of the business is its **respect for the natural environment**. The marina operates within the **Natura 2000 site – Dolina Nidy**, while the kayaking activities and infrastructure have been adapted to nature conservation requirements. This allows active tourism to develop while maintaining a balance between visitors' needs and the protection of valuable natural resources.
- The company consistently follows the principles of **sustainability**, incorporating its three pillars – **environmental, social and economic**.
- In its daily operations, it cooperates with local businesses, accommodation

providers, catering companies, transport operators and tourist attractions, strengthening the local economy and creating a network of partnerships.

- **Community engagement and responsibility for the local environment** are also important elements of its activities. Together with its partners, the company participates in initiatives to clean the Nida River, remove storm damage and maintain the attractiveness and safety of waterways. In doing so, it demonstrates that tourism development can go hand in hand with care for the environment.

Key conclusion

„U Dorotki" proves that a small family enterprise can successfully deliver eco-friendly tourism. By combining active recreation, environmental care, local partnership and authentic experiences, it offers a high-value product that enhances the attractiveness of the Świętokrzyskie region and perfectly meets the needs of contemporary tourism and the MICE market.

Results of Group Breakout Sessions

Participants worked in breakout groups of 5–6 representatives spanning diverse tourism disciplines. Each team received a comprehensive brief requiring them to design a complete, sustainable event concept (selecting from a conference, executive meeting, corporate training session, team-building event, or international incentive trip).

Using guided criteria, teams developed detailed proposals featuring:

- Event title/theme and venue selection
- Core sustainability elements (location, eco-catering, materials, low-emission transport, CSR actions, and authentic attractions)
- Strategic keywords highlighting environmental and ESG differentiators

The teams successfully:

1. Structured full event plans incorporating sustainable event design principles.
2. Mapped regional assets to build the destination's competitive advantage.
3. Highlighted clear ESG differentiators.

The group work produced five original sustainable event concepts, each featuring a distinct theme, programme, partner selection, and range of proposed attractions. All

five projects demonstrated that sustainability delivers a genuine competitive advantage for a destination, while the responsible use of local assets creates engaging, valuable, and unique experiences for business event delegates

TOP 5 Regional Attractions and Products Recommended by workshop participants

Krzemień pasiasty (Stripped Flint) – a symbol of the region and a unique souvenir

Known as the *Stone of Optimism, it* is one of the most distinctive symbols of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship and the rare gemstone. Jewellery-making masterclass led by local artists allow participants to discover its history, and to create their own souvenir or amulet. It is an excellent example of combining local craftsmanship with an engaging incentive programme.

Świętokrzyskie Vineyards and Culinary Heritage

Rapidly expanding vineyards—such as *Winnica Terra*, *Winnica Sandomierska*, and *Złota Wieś*—continue an 800-year winemaking legacy. Wine tastings, meetings with winemakers, and regional food pairings offer authentic culinary experiences that directly support local producers.

Kielce Countryside Museum (Muzeum Wsi Kieleckiej) in Tokarnia – tradition in practice

Delegates explore folk culture through hands-on workshops led by local Rural Women's Associations and artisans. Activities like paper cutting, basket weaving, pottery, and tissue-paper crafting deliver engaging, culturally immersive team building.

UNESCO Świętokrzyski Geopark – exceptional natural heritage

One of Poland's most valuable geological areas and a showcase of the region. The UNESCO Geopark offers opportunities to organise educational programmes, outdoor games and activities exploring the history of the Earth and the unique natural features of the Góry Świętokrzyskie. It combines education, physical activity and sustainable tourism.

Chęciny Royal Castle and Paradise Cave (Jaskinia Raj) – history, nature and excitement

The ruins of the Royal Castle in Chęciny and Jaskinia Raj (a limestone karst cave) form one of the region's most recognisable tourism products. Guided tours, historical outdoor quests, and themed events offer ideal settings for corporate team building.

Local Regional Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas

Świętokrzyskie offers a rich selection of authentic local items suitable for corporate gifting and incentive itineraries:

Krzemień pasiasty (Striped Flint) – Artisanal jewellery, amulets and elegant gifts.

Śliwka Szydłowska (chocolate-covered plum) and regional preserves from Plum Musem (Muzeum Śliwki) in Szydłów.

Sandomierz orchards - Cold-pressed apple juices and natural preserves.

Regional wines - Craft wines from local Świętokrzyskie vineyards.

Lavender Products – Scented candles, natural cosmetics, and scented lavender sachets from local growers.

Majonez Kielecki – mayonaise - one of the region's most recognisable brands.

Regional Cheeses and Honey, which perfectly complement the culinary offers.

Using local brands and products at MICE events not only enriches the participant experience, but also supports regional businesses, promotes culinary and craft heritage, and strengthens the image of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship as a destination offering authentic and sustainable experiences.

Expert -Moderated Industry Discussion

The meeting concluded with a discussion moderated by the facilitators.

Key panel conclusions

- Participants emphasised that **local tourism businesses possesses abundant creative ideas**, but require greater municipal support, open dialogue, and active authority involvement to implement them effectively.
- There is a pressing **need for stronger promotional communication**. The region must showcase its strengths, good practices, and offerings more dynamically to event planners and residents alike.
- **Study visits for representatives of local authorities and decision-makers** could play an important role in development, enabling them to better understand the region's potential and facilitating decisions that support the growth of business tourism.
- Participants noted that **the tourism potential of many municipalities remains underutilised and insufficiently promoted**, despite their attractive natural, cultural and infrastructural assets.
- A need was identified for **regular industry meetings, training sessions and networking events** to encourage knowledge sharing, relationship-building and the development of local entrepreneurs' expertise.
- A key expectation is to **identify local industry leaders and ambassadors** who will bring the community together, inspire action and initiate joint projects.
- The panel also highlighted the need to **promote regional products as part of the MICE offer**. Instead of standard promotional items, local specialities and handicrafts should be used, such as regional plums, cheeses, jewellery and artisanal products.
- Participants identified the need to **develop a recognisable collection of regional promotional items and gifts** that would build the destination's identity and serve as a showcase for the region at business events.

Summary

The closing discussion confirmed that the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship possesses immense potential for business tourism growth. Fully unlocking this potential requires closer collaboration between private businesses and local authorities, targeted marketing, and a shared strategic vision. Investing in local leadership, professional upskilling, and regional products will be central to building a competitive, sustainable MICE offer.

3.3. WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Lublin, 20.02.2026, Lubelskie Centrum Konferencyjne

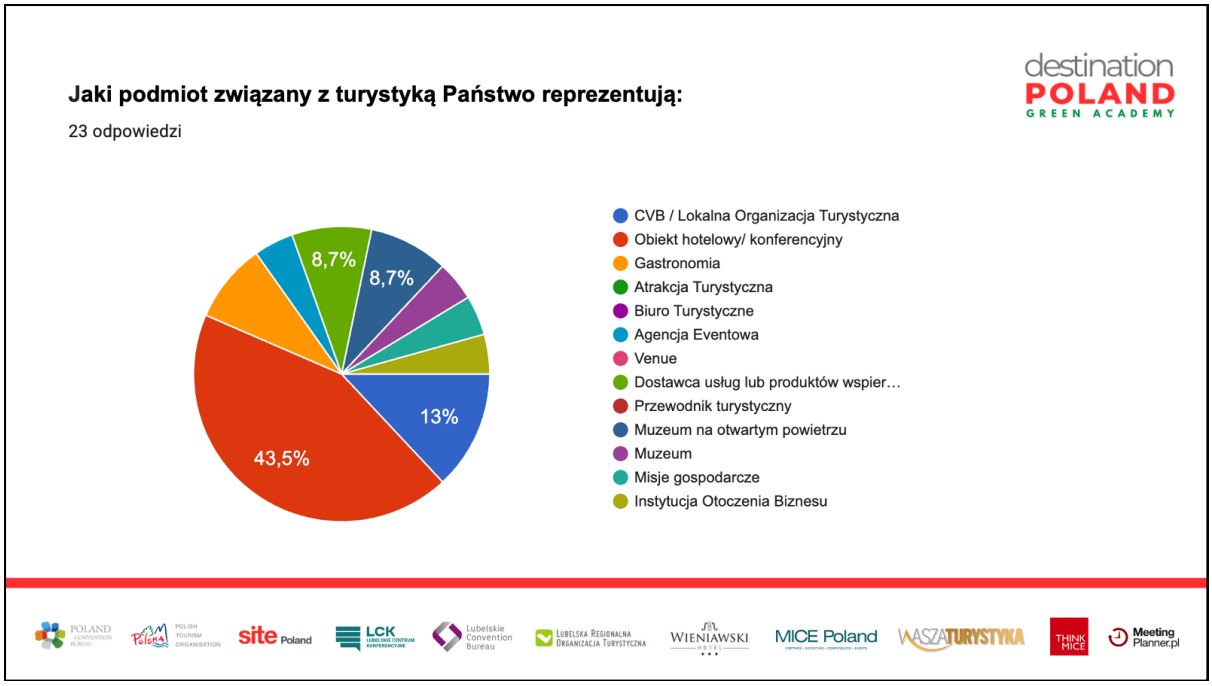


The meeting brought together 24 representatives of the MICE sector from Lublin and the surrounding region: representing hotels, conference and event venues, tourist attractions, event services providers and regional tourism development institution.

Representatives of Lubelskie Convention Bureau – **Weronika Kwiecień and Katarzyna Ostrowska-Malczewska –** as well as **Małgorzata Lipska-Boichuk**, representing **Lokalna Organizacja Turystyczna Metropolia Lublin** (the Lublin Metropolis Local Tourism Organisation), attended the meeting and provided organisational support.

Survey – data and conclusions

The survey carried out among 23 participants of the Destination Poland Green Academy workshops shows that sustainability is becoming increasingly prominent in the awareness of tourism and MICE sector representatives, although the level of practical implementation stilvaries.



Summary of survey findings

The key finding is a high level of awareness among respondents of the business benefits of sustainability. As many as **78.3%** cited building a positive organisational image, while 69.6% identified increased operational efficiency. More than **half also saw potential for greater employee engagement (52.2%)** and improved access to financing **(47.8%).** Significantly, every single respondent identified at least one benefit of sustainability.

At the same time, the results show that the industry is at different stages of putting these principles into practice. **39.1%** of organisations are already implementing specific measures and projects, while **26.1% are only taking their first steps.** On the other hand, **34.8%** of respondents report that their organisations have not yet begun such activities. This points to a clear need for further education, knowledge exchange and practical examples.

The formalisation of ESG activities remains an area with room for development. **More than half of the organisations already have an ESG policy or are developing one**, but 37.5% do not yet have a formal document. This shows that many organisations are taking practical action, even where these actions are not yet part of a coherent strategy.

Environmental activities clearly dominate among organisations implementing specific initiatives. **81.8%** of respondents reported activities related to local nature and environmental protection. More than half **(54.5%)** run social initiatives for local communities, while **45.5%** are involved in activities with a broader, global dimension.

The protection of cultural heritage was cited least often **(18.2%)**, suggesting clear potential for further development in this area.

Key conclusion

The local tourism and MICE industry recognises the vital importance of sustainability, but is still developing the necessary expertise and systemic solutions. The primary challenge is no longer convincing organisations *whether* action is worthwhile, but demonstrating **how to translate awareness into concrete measures, a strategy, measurable goals and a formal policy.**

Good practices from the region

An engaging highlight of the programme was the presentation of inspiring case studies from the Lublin Voivodeship, demonstrating how responsible practices deliver a genuine competitive edge.

Featured presentations included:

- **Smart Zone, Lubelska Akademia Potencjału** – Cutting-edge microbiological and enzymatic technologies in commercial practice,
- **Łubinowe Wzgórze** – Authentic sustainable tourism grounded in ecology, permaculture, and holistic well-being,
- **Arche Nałęczów** – A benchmark model for historic property revitalisation, combining environmental, social, and economic responsibility with regional growth,
- **Lubelskie Centrum Konferencyjne** (LCK) – Operationalising ESG through efficient venue management, modern technologies, workforce investment, and local partnerships,
- **Hotel Wieniawski Lublin** – Embedding sustainability through local partnerships, tech innovation, and responsible hotel management.

Case 1

Modern Microbiological and Enzymatic Technologies in business practice
Smart Zone. Presenter: Olga Lenarczyk



Innovative solutions based on microbiological and enzymatic preparations were presented, fully aligned with **zero-waste** and sustainability principles. The technology offers an eco-friendly alternative to traditional harsh chemicals and applies across various economic sectors, including tourism.

Key elements of the presentation

- Deploying modern microbiological formulations that support environmental protection and minimise chemical usage.
- Broad technical applications, including: soil and water bioremediation, industrial infrastructure cleaning, machinery maintenance and sanitation in production facilities, and hygiene management across the HoReCa sector.
- Supporting industrial operations such as cleaning machinery, production halls, sewerage systems, and preliminary wastewater treatment.
- Serving as an engaging highlight for study visits and educational programmes tailored to business leaders, agriculture, forestry, and academia.

Conclusions

- Microbiological innovations effectively advance sustainability goals across industrial operations and hospitality services,
- These solutions combine environmental benefits with high operational efficiency and reduced chemical consumption,
- The technology inspires event organisers and study visit coordinators by demonstrating real-world applications of green tech,
- It represents an exemplary model of science–industry collaboration yielding sustainable, commercially viable solutions

Case 2

Sustainable Tourism – Authentic Solutions Over Greenwashing. Łubinowe Wzgórze. Presenter: Karolina Dziąbor



The presentation demonstrates that sustainable tourism should not be based solely on marketing claims, but on tangible, measurable action. Using **Łubinowe Wzgórze** as a case study, the speaker showcased a business model that consistently integrates environmental protection, community support, and guest well-being while highlighting methods to identify and combat greenwashing.

Key Elements of the Presentation

- The core philosophy of Łubinowe Wzgórza rests on living in harmony with nature and adopting a holistic wellness framework across physical, emotional, social, and environmental dimensions,
- Practical sustainable venue management techniques include: applying permaculture principles, rainwater harvesting and reuse, geothermal heat pumps and photovoltaic solar arrays, and maintaining a natural swimming pond supporting local biodiversity,
- Common forms of greenwashing were analysed, underscoring that credible eco-action demands transparency, hard data, and measurable outcomes,
- A proposed assessment system for tourism venues was presented, covering areas such as waste management, energy efficiency, water retention, the use of local products and environmentally friendly building materials.
- Key performance metrics were shared, demonstrating reduced energy consumption, permaculture growth, organic waste composting, and a high proportion of regional suppliers.

Conclusions

- Łubinowe Wzgórze proves that sustainability can be an integral part of a business model rather than merely an image-building exercise.
- Authenticity in tourism is built primarily on **measurable results**, transparency and consistently implemented environmental and social initiatives.
- The example of Łubinowe Wzgórze demonstrates that responsible tourism can simultaneously increase the appeal of an offer while securing a strong competitive edge.
- **Developing unified industry standards and certification systems helps distinguish genuinely eco-conscious venues from marketing-driven claims.**

Case 3

Property Revitalisation as a Foundation for Regional Growth
Hotel Arche Nałęczów. Presenter: Artur Turkawiński



The presentation showcased **how hospitality sustainability can be achieved by revitalising historic properties while managing environmental, social, and economic factors responsibly**. Featuring Hotel Arche Nałęczów (formerly *Sanatorium Milicyjne*), the business model combines heritage preservation, eco-responsibility, and community support.

Key Elements of the Presentation

- Revitalising an existing structure instead of constructing a new building preserved historic character, minimized environmental degradation, and delivered modern guest facilities,
- The hotel executes extensive eco-friendly and community initiatives: partnering with regional suppliers, mitigating food waste, sorting waste, eliminating single-use plastics, educating guests on eco-habits, operating photovoltaic solar systems, and organising the *"Czysta Rzeka"* river clean-up campaign and tree planting via the *#sharehospitality* initiative,
- Social responsibility forms a core pillar of the hotel's operations – it cooperates with local schools, cultural institutions and community organisations, while participating in charitable and educational activities and creating approximately 200 jobs in the region.

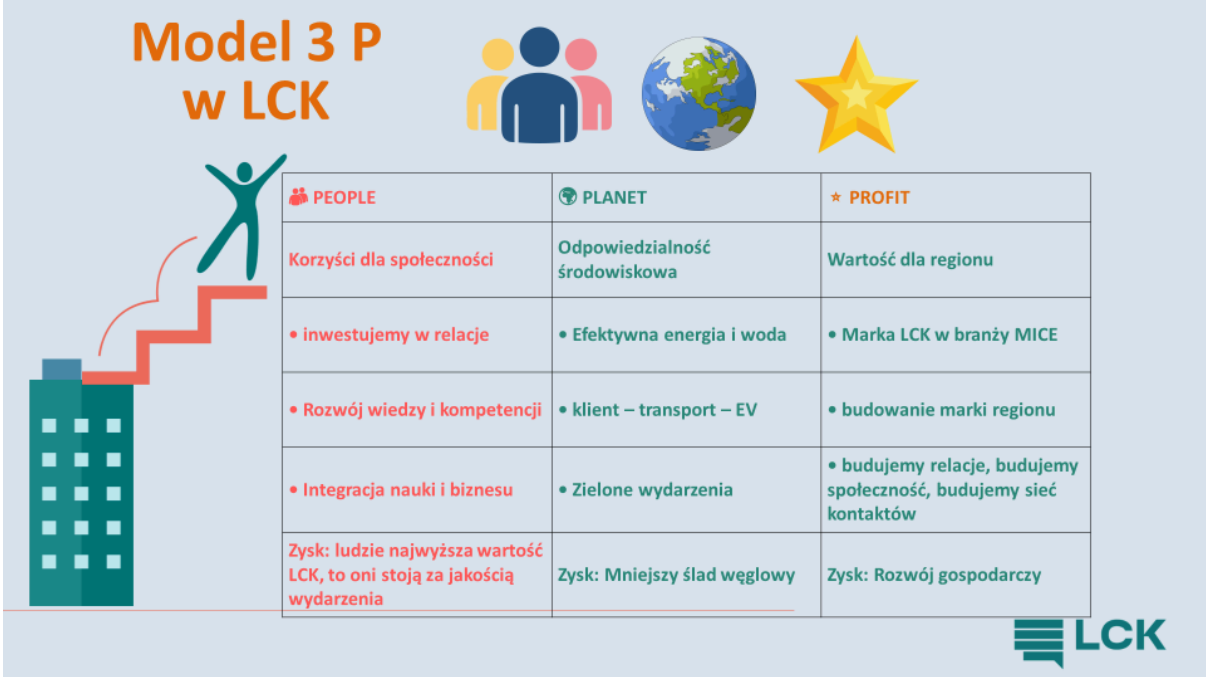
- The economic model is based on long-term development, boosting local businesses and actively promoting Nałęczów as an attractive tourism and conference destination, while generating substantial municipal tax and spa-fee revenues.

Conclusions

- Arche Nałęczów proves that **property revitalisation is one of the most sustainable development models in hospitality, blending heritage conservation with modern management.**
- Daily operational measures – waste reduction, efficient energy/water management, guest education, and ethical purchasing—tangibly reduce carbon footprints.
- Cooperation with local partners and cultural institutions enhances offer authenticity and builds strong community bonds.
- **A responsible hotel acts as a regional ESG leader by seamlessly uniting commercial, social, and educational functions**

Case 4

ESG in Practice – Ethics, People and Environment
Lubelskie Centrum Konferencyjne (LCK).
Presenter: Magdalena Gałka



LCK demonstrated the practical integration of ESG principles into venue management, proving that responsible operations deliver simultaneous environmental, social, and economic returns. Investments in energy efficiency, staff development, and transparent management strengthen market competitiveness

Key elements of the presentation

- **Lubelskie Centrum Konferencyjne** is a premier venue with extensive experience in organising events – more than **1,800 events**, **300,000 participants** and 11 conference rooms confirm its strong position in the business meetings market.
- **Since 2016,** LCK has consistently built an ESG framework around three core pillars:
  - **Governance** – Transparent management, clear principles of cooperation and building a values-driven organisation based on shared responsibility.
  - **Environment** – Investment in renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, EV transport infrastructure, local sourcing, and footprint reduction.
  - **Social** – Developing in-house staff teams, hosting educational activities and

supporting local community.

- Technical features include solar thermal collectors, ground-source heat recovery, smart Building Management Systems (BMS), and rainwater harvesting for operational use.
- An important element of the strategy was replacing outsourcing with directly employed security and cleaning staff. This solution increased the organisation's responsibility for service quality, strengthened employees' sense of connection to the workplace and improved the overall quality of service.

Conclusions

Lubelskie Centrum Konferencyjne demonstrates that **ESG can provide an effective management model for a conference venue**, integrating environmental, social and economic objectives.

- Investments in energy efficiency and modern technologies make it possible to reduce operating costs significantly while also reducing environmental impact.
- Social responsibility begins with people – building in-house teams, developing employees and creating a values-driven organisational culture translate into higher service quality.
- Transparent management and cooperation with local partners strengthen the organisation's credibility and support the development of the regional economy.
- The example of LCK confirms that sustainability is not limited to technological investments – management ethics, responsibility towards employees and long-term stakeholder relationships are equally important.

Case 5

Sustainability Through Local Cooperation & Innovation
Hotel Wieniawski Lublin. Presenter: Marcin Kania

The presentation by Wieniawski Hotel Lublin demonstrates that responsible hotel management can simultaneously strengthen relationships with the local community, improve operational efficiency and enhance the quality of the guest experience. The hotel's initiatives cover all three pillars of sustainability – **environmental, social and economic.**

In the social area, the hotel is actively involved in charitable initiatives, cooperates with local attractions and cultural institutions, and promotes regional experiences, including by organising events at Muzeum Wsi Lubelskiej and cooperating with Muzeum Narodowe and sports and recreational venues. Supporting local products and suppliers is also an important element.

In the economic area, solutions have been implemented to improve the hotel's operations, such as the **HOBO** utilities monitoring system, water-saving solutions in guest rooms, AI tools for analysing guest feedback, and an offering based on local products and partners. These measures have improved operational efficiency and reduced operating costs.

Key outcomes

- active involvement of the hotel in social and charitable initiatives,
- development of cooperation with local partners and regional attractions,
- promotion of local products as part of the hotel's offering,
- reduction in water consumption by approximately **15 m³ per month**,
- reduction in electricity costs by approximately **3%.**

Conclusions

- Cooperation with local partners enhances the attractiveness of the hotel's offer and supports the growth of the entire destination.
- Community engagement and the promotion of regional products elevate

experience authenticity and brand reputation.

- Smart technologies, such as utility monitoring systems and AI-powered feedback analysis, help improve management efficiency and reduce costs.
- The example of Hotel Wieniawski proves that sustainability relies on daily operational choices and consistent local partnerships just as much as capital investments.

Results of Group Breakout Sessions

Breakout groups of 4–5 participants designed complete, sustainable event proposals (selecting from conferences, business meetings, executive training, outdoor team building, or international incentive trips).

Mini-proposals incorporated:

- Event title (theme) and venue selection
- Core sustainability pillars (location, eco-catering, materials, transport, CSR, and regional attractions)
- Keywords highlighting ESG differentiators,

The breakout sessions **produced four original MICE event concepts,** each featuring distinct themes, supplier partnerships, and regional experiences. All projects proved that sustainability delivers a genuine competitive advantage for a destination, while responsible asset usage creates engaging, valuable, and unique experiences for business event delegates.

TOP 5 Regional Attractions and Products Recommended by workshop participants

Lublin and the Lubelskie region form a destination that perfectly aligns with the **sustainable MICE principles**. It combines a rich cultural heritage, regional gastronomy, eco-transport, modern venues and strong social and environmental initiatives.

Lublin Open Air Village Museum *(Skansen)*

One of Poland's premier open-air museums, ideal for CSR initiatives, incentive itineraries, and team building. Delegates participate in culinary masterclasses with Rural Women's Associations (*Koła Gospodyń Wiejskich*), traditional craft workshops, recycled instrument crafting, and folk concerts.

Perła Brewery & Lublin Underground *(Browar Perła and Podziemia Lubelskie)*

A blend of industrial history and regional flavours. Guided cellar tours combined with craft beer tastings and dinners offer an iconic corporate activity

Nałęczów Health Resort – Well-being & Slow Tourism

Poland's sole cardiac health resort, providing optimal settings for corporate retreats combining business with wellness. Famous for local specialties like *Śliwka Nałęczowska*, lavender products, and artisanal honey.

Old Town & Lublin Castle (*Stare Miasto i Zamek Lubelski)*

A prominent historical landmark in eastern Poland. Old Town walking tours, visits to Lublin Castle and the Holy Trinity Chapel (*Kaplica Trójcy Świętej*), and interactive urban quests deliver rich cultural experiences.

Lublin Culinary Trail (*Lubelski Szlak Smaków*)

Authentic gastronomy featuring *Cebularz* onion flatbread workshops, artisanal coffee tastings from local roasteries, rare bean honey (*miód fasolowy*), lavender hydrosols, and *Śliwka Nałęczowska.*

Local Regional Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas

Cebularz Lubelski (an onion flatbread with poppy seeds). An EU-protected regional product and a symbol of Lublin. Perfect as part of a culinary workshop or local breakfast.

Śliwka Nałęczowska (a chocolate-covered plum) – one of the region's most recognisable confectionery brands, long associated with Nałęczów and the Lubelskie region.

Honey from Lubelskie apiaries, including the unique **miód fasolowy (bean honey)**, one of the region's most distinctive products.

Lavender from the Lubelskie region – natural hydrosols, essential oils, candles and cosmetics from regional growers.

Local coffee roasteries – artisan-roasted coffee provides an interesting tasting experience and an elegant gift for event participants.

Lubelski Stół Products – carefully selected gift boxes featuring regional preserves, syrups, honey, and handmade chocolates.

Industry discussion moderated by experts

The meeting concluded with a discussion moderated by the facilitators.

Key conclusions

- **Lublin can significantly strengthen its position in the MICE market through close cooperation with the entire Lubelskie region**, creating a shared and coherent offering based on the potential of its cities, attractions and local partners.
- **The region has a clearly defined identity** rooted in authenticity, multicultural heritage; it is therefore worth jointly developing communication and promotional activities that emphasise its unique character.

Cultural diversity, openness and tolerance are among Lublin's most important distinguishing features and can create a competitive advantage when hosting international events.

- **Lublin and the region are prepared to host large-scale events**, and their

experience to date confirms the high quality of cooperation between the industry, institutions and local partners.

- **The abundance of green spaces, natural assets and creative ideas** offers extensive opportunities to design sustainable incentive programmes, outdoor events and well-being activities.
- **The region's authenticity and its ability to combine tradition with modernity** are strengths that can distinguish Lublin's offering from those of other business destinations.
- Industry stakeholders highlighted the need for regular networking, knowledge exchange, and joint promotional initiatives to maximize destination potential.

Conclusion

Lublin and the Lubelskie region possess significant strengths based on authenticity, cooperation and abundant natural and cultural assets. Future growth as a leading MICE destination requires, above all, stronger cooperation between local partners, joint regional marketing and the creation of a comprehensive offer that combines the potential of the entire region with the principles of sustainability.






destination
POLAND
GREEN ACADEMY






Zrównoważona Turystyka:
Autentyczne Rozwiązania a
Greenwashing


site Poland


TIMU




skala
i potencjał
obiektu


destination
POLAND






destination
POLAND

3.4. WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Poznań, 13.03.2026, Puro Hotel

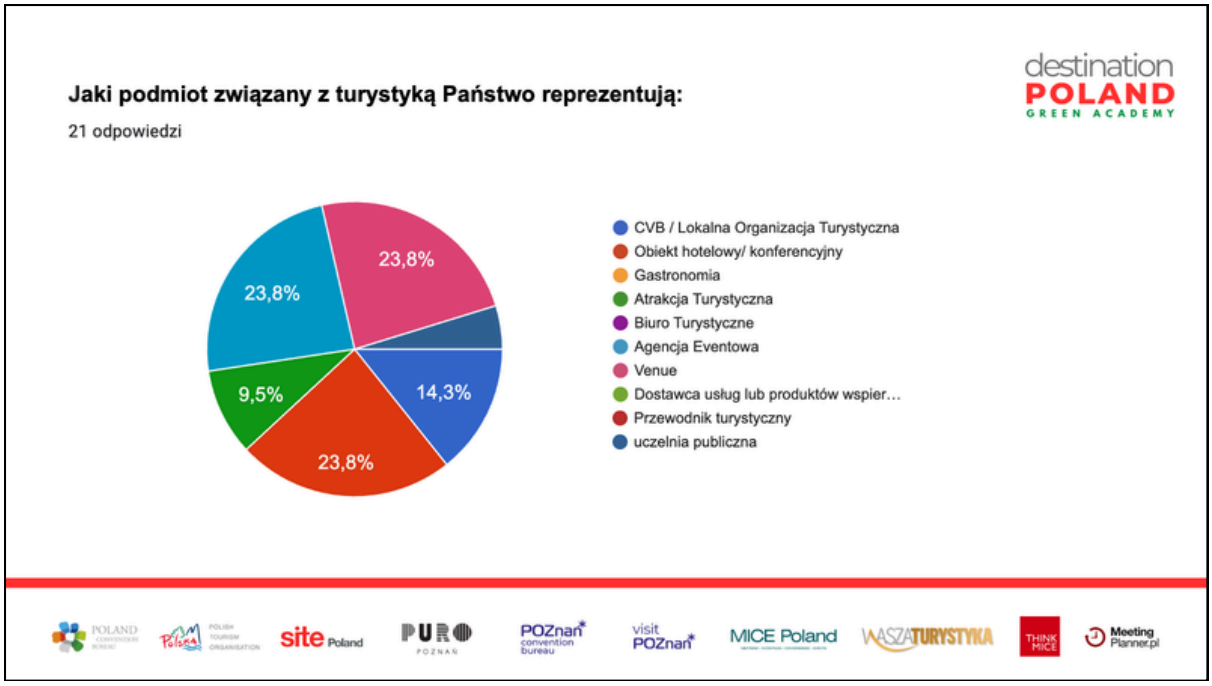


The meeting brought together 24 representatives of the region's MICE industry: conference venues, hotels, event agencies, trade fairs, local attractions, service and product providers, as well as institutions supporting the development of business tourism.

Representatives of Poznań Local Tourism **Poznańska Lokalna Organizacja Turystyczna, Maja Kieszek and Dominik Krobski,** attended the meeting and provided organisational support.

Survey – Data and Key Findings

The survey conducted among 21 workshop participants demonstrates a high level of awareness regarding the importance of sustainability among representatives of the tourism and MICE industries.



Summary of Survey Findings

The primary conclusion is a strong belief in the commercial value of sustainability. A striking **76.2%** of respondents identified enhancing the organisation's brand image as the main benefit, while **61.9%** cited increased operational efficiency. Greater employee engagement (**47.6%**) and improved access to financing (**38.1%**) were also highlighted as major advantages. Notably, not a single participant stated that sustainability offers no value to an organisation.

Responses regarding the implementation phase confirm a strong readiness to act. A majority of **57.1%** of organisations are already implementing specific sustainability measures or projects, while the remaining **42.9%** are taking their initial steps.

At the same time, a clear gap exists between practical ESG activities and their formalisation. Only **14.3%** of organisations maintain a formal ESG policy.

Environmental measures clearly dominate specific initiatives, accounting for **85.7%** of responses. Activities supporting local communities and protecting cultural heritage are also significant, each cited by **57.1%** of respondents. Furthermore, **42.9%** of organisations implement initiatives with a broader global impact.

Key conclusion

The survey shows that participants are ready to take action, with most organisations already implementing sustainability principles. However, the central challenge remains transitioning from isolated initiatives to a strategic, formalised, and measurable approach to ESG. It is particularly important to continue building expertise in drafting ESG policies, setting targets, measuring outcomes, and integrating environmental and social actions with cultural heritage initiatives.

Good Practices from the Region

Participants presented inspiring case studies and good practices:

- **Grupa Międzynarodowe Targi Poznańskie (MTP Group):** Delivering events in alignment with sustainability standards and measuring carbon footprints.
- **Poznań University of Economics and Business (*Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Poznaniu*):** Institutional sustainability initiatives, the role of academia in education, and cross-sector collaboration with businesses and economic development bodies.

Case 1

Carbon Footprint Measurement as an Industry Standard
Grupa Międzynarodowe Targi Poznańskie (MTP Group)
Presenter: Magdalena Hołowińska



Key elements of the presentation

Using the ICCA congress as an example, a **carbon footprint report** prepared for the **ICCA Central European Chapter Meeting 2025** in Poznań was presented. It was developed in accordance with the **GHG Protocol** methodology.

- The audit covered all major emission sources associated with event organisation, including delegate transport, energy consumption, accommodation, catering, materials, and waste management.
- The organiser worked exclusively with **regional suppliers**, while solutions supporting the sustainable organisation of meetings were implemented during the event.
- The event's total carbon footprint amounted to **19.9 t CO_2e**, or an average of **258 kg CO_2e per participant**, making it possible to identify key areas for the future optimisation.
- Short-term recommendations included **promoting rail transport, increasing local and plant-based menu options, adopting renewable energy and**

minimising waste.

- MTP's long-term strategy involves adopting a sustainable events policy, systematically monitoring emissions, setting carbon reduction targets, and partnering with renewable energy providers.
- The example presented demonstrated that **measuring and analysing the carbon footprint are practical tools that support informed decision-making and the creation of more responsible events in the MICE industry**.

Conclusions

- Even a single event can provide valuable data supporting the development of an organiser's ESG strategy.
- Working with local suppliers, choosing sustainable catering, promoting eco-friendly transport, and managing energy efficiently are the most critical factors in reducing event environmental impact.
- **The MTP group report demonstrates that carbon footprint measurement and reporting are rapidly becoming benchmark standards for a modern, responsible meetings industry.**

Case 2

European Tourism Sustainability Monitoring (ETSM2030)
Poznań University of Economics and Business
Presenter: Dr Natalia Latuszek



Key elements of the presentation

- Funded by the European Union, the ETSM2030 project supported small and medium-sized tourism enterprises (SMEs) in implementing sustainability principles, gaining certification, and fostering international partnerships. **Eighty-two enterprises across six European countries participated.**
- Examples of international **Sustainability Innovation Projects (SIPs)** were presented, demonstrating how environmental, social and economic objectives can be combined with tourism development.
- One featured initiative - **Eco-Social Sustainability through Active Tourism and Environmental Education** - combined active tourism with environmental education through activities involving local communities, such as river clean-up campaigns, workshops and educational initiatives for children and young people.
- Another project – **Evening Events with Local Producers** – promoted short supply chains by organising culinary events in partnership with regional food producers, boosting local economies and responsible consumption.

- The **Improving Mental Health During Work for Employees** project addressed staff well-being, producing the ***Mental Health Toolbox***—a practical toolkit supporting workplace mental wellness.

Conclusions

- Sustainability encompasses environmental, social, educational, and economic pillars that mutually reinforce one another.
- International cooperation and the exchange of good practices enable the more effective implementation of innovative solutions in tourism and the meetings industry.
- Engaging local communities, regional producers and academic institutions enhances the authenticity of the tourism offer and increases its positive impact on the region.
- **Prioritising staff well-being is emerging as a vital component of MICE sector ESG strategies.**

Results of Group Breakout Sessions

Participants collaborated in breakout groups of 4–5 representatives spanning diverse tourism fields. Each group received a detailed task brief to design a complete, sustainable event concept (selecting from a conference, executive meeting, corporate training session, outdoor team-building trip, or international incentive programme).

Based on guided criteria, teams developed mini-proposals featuring:

- Event title (theme) and venue selection
- Core sustainability pillars (location, catering, materials, transport, CSR, and authentic attractions)
- Strategic keywords highlighting environmental and ESG differentiators

The teams:

- Structured event concepts incorporating sustainable design principles
- Identified local assets to build destination competitive advantage

- Highlighted distinct ESG differentiators

The breakout sessions produced four original MICE event concepts, each featuring distinct themes, supplier partnerships, and regional experiences. All projects proved that sustainability delivers a genuine competitive advantage for a destination, while responsible asset usage creates engaging, valuable, and unique experiences for business event delegates.

TOP 5 Regional Attractions and Products Recommended by workshop participants

Poznań has the potential to distinguish itself as a MICE destination offering **"green signature experiences"** – authentic experiences based on local identity, responsibility and high-quality programmes. Poznań offers a wide range of attractions that make it possible to create **authentic and sustainable MICE programmes**, combining local heritage, culture, gastronomy and nature.

Workshops at Rogalowe Muzeum Poznania

An iconic local attraction where interactive St. Martin's Croissant (*Rogal Świętomarciński*) baking masterclasses introduce delegates to local history, Poznań dialect, and culinary traditions—ideal for incentive trips and team building.

Wielkopolska Vineyards and Regional Wine Tastings

Vineyard tours combined with tastings, winemaker meet-and-greets, and regional food pairings support short supply chains and local gastronomy while delivering authentic experiences

Forest Bathing in Morasko Meteorite Reserve (Rezerwat Meteoryt Morasko)

A unique nature site featuring meteorite impact craters and educational trails, perfect for forest bathing, mindfulness walks, and well-being programs.

Culinary Masterclass with Rural Women's Associations (Koła Gospodyń Wiejskich)

Cooking traditional Wielkopolska dishes alongside local hosts fosters team bonding, supports regional communities, preserves culinary heritage, and promotes intergenerational integration.

Autodrom Poznań – Eco & Safe Driving Masterclass

A team-building programme using electric vehicles at the racetrack, teaching safe driving, eco-driving principles, and practical electromobility skills (charging, route planning)—ideal for conferences and corporate events

Local Regional Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas

Poznań distinguishes itself as a MICE destination through an authentic selection of local products and crafts suitable for corporate gifting.

St. Martin's Croissant (*Rogal Świętomarciński*) - Poznań's iconic delicacy, perfect as a welcome gift or workshop theme

Wielkopolska wines – Tasting gift sets and winemaker visits at local boutique vineyards.

Regional Craft beers from Wielkopolska – Artisanal brews from renowned local breweries such as *Szałpiw*, *Brovaria*, and *Fortuna*

Natural Cosmetics & Candles: Handcrafted products made by local producers using natural regional ingredients

Expert-Moderated Industry Discussion

The event concluded with a discussion moderated by the facilitators.

Key conclusions

- **Poznań has the potential to compete effectively with Poland's leading MICE destinations**, offering high-quality infrastructure, professional facilities and authentic local experiences.
- **The city is well-equipped for large events and congresses,** with effective cooperation between the industry, local authorities, Poznań Convention Bureau and local partners acting as a major competitive strength.
- **Poznań's extensive green spaces, parks and natural areas are among its greatest assets** and could be used far more effectively when designing incentive programmes, well-being activities and events aligned with sustainability principles.



Poznań's convenient location near the German border and along major transport routes ensures convenient domestic and international access, ideal for European-scale events

- **The extensive network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**, foundations and community initiatives represents significant yet still untapped potential. These organisations could become partners in delivering valuable CSR projects and programmes that engage event participants.
- Participants also emphasised the need to **promote local attractions, products and responsible practices more effectively**, to position Poznań as a modern, sustainable MICE hub.

Conclusion

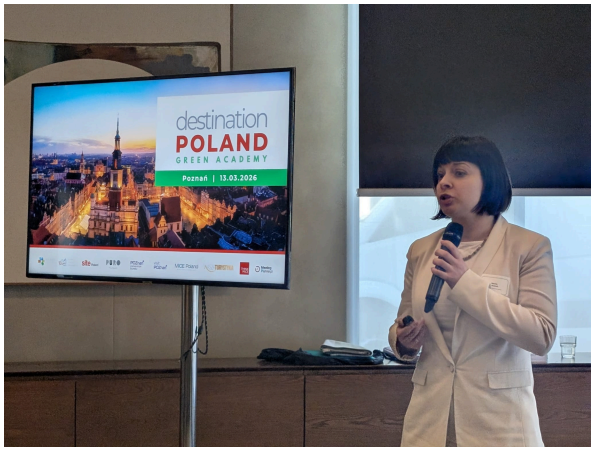
Poznań has all the required components to establish a leading position as a responsible MICE destination. The key to future growth lies in maximizing local assets, deepening cross-sector partnerships, and delivering experience-driven offerings rooted in existing regional resources.


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ICCA CENTRAL EUROPEAN CHAPTER
meeting, 31.08 - 2.09.2025
Grupa MTP


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CELEO ZRÓWNOWAŻONEGO ROZWOJU

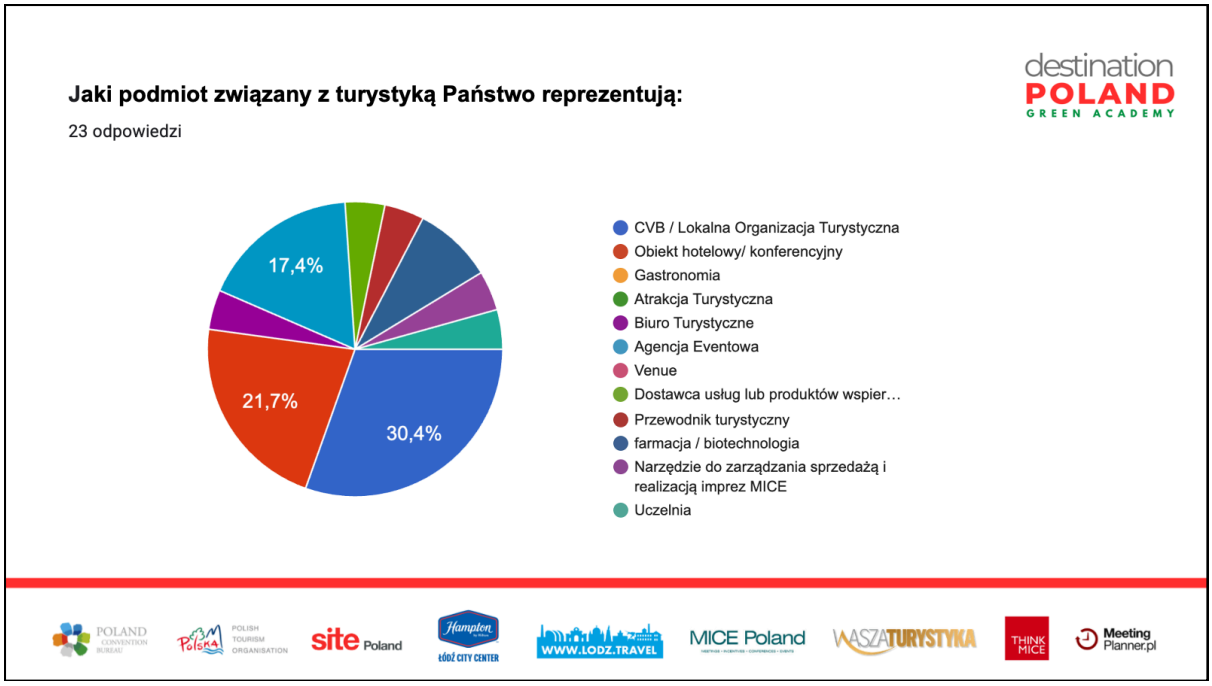
3.5.WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Łódź, 15.05.2026, Hampton by Hilton Hotel



The meeting brought together 24 industry representatives from Łódź and the surrounding region: MICE agencies, hotels, local attractions and service providers. **Gabriela Kaźmierczak, Tomasz Koralewski, Jakub Rosły, Paweł Szewczyk and Katarzyna Borowińska from Łódź Convention Bureau / Łódzka Organizacja Turystyczna** attended the meeting and provided organisational support.

Survey – data and conclusions

The survey conducted among 23 participants in the Destination Poland Green Academy workshops in Łódź demonstrates a high level of sustainability awareness and engagement within the local tourism and MICE industries.



Summary of Survey Findings

Participants clearly recognise the commercial value of sustainability. As many as **82.6%** of respondents identified enhancing the organisation's brand image as the main benefit, while **52.2%** cited improved access to financing. For **34.8%**, increased operational efficiency represents a significant outcome, while **30.4%**highlighted greater employee engagement. Notably, not a single respondent reported a lack of benefits or unawareness regarding potential ESG impacts.

This high level of awareness is reflected in operational practice. A total of **73.7%** of organisations are actively implementing specific sustainability or ESG measures, **34.8%** are taking their initial steps, and **8.7%** described themselves as industry leaders in this field. Meanwhile, **17.4%** have not yet initiated actions, demonstrating varying degrees of organizational maturity across the sector.

Łódź stands out for the exceptional strength of the social dimension in its initiatives. An overwhelming **92.9%** of organisations implementing ESG projects reported activities directly supporting local communities. Environmental measures are carried out by **71.4%**, while **35.7%** engage in cultural heritage preservation and another **35.7%** participate in projects with a global scope.

Formalising ESG activities remains an important target for further development[cite: 26]. Although **31.6%** of organisations maintain a formal ESG policy and an additional **21.1%** are actively drafting one, **36.8%** still lack formal documentation. This confirms

that practical on-the-ground initiatives frequently precede strategic formalisation.

Key conclusion

The tourism and MICE industries in Łódź stand out for their high level of activity and the exceptionally strong social pillar of their approach to sustainability. Initiatives supporting local communities and nature clearly dominate, proving that ESG is viewed not merely as a tool for business efficiency, but as a meaningful vehicle for generating positive impacts for the destination and its residents.

Good Practices from the Region

Participants presented inspiring regional initiatives and best practices:

- **Hotel Arche Tobaco:** The *"Housekeeping on request"* initiative.
- **TamTu:** Mobile urban gaming leveraging existing city infrastructure to promote walking, regional business partnerships, and digital solutions over printed paper.
- **NeuroEvents:** A pioneering approach to event design centered on participant well-being, neurodiversity, and reducing sensory overload.

Case 1

Small change – Major impact. How "Housekeeping on request" Supports Sustainable Hospitality
Hotel Arche Tobaco. Presenter: Dawid Szymczak



Key Elements of the Presentation

A simple yet highly effective initiative was presented, proving that sustainability does not always require capital-intensive investments. The *"Housekeeping on request"* project allows guests on multi-night stays to voluntarily opt out of daily room servicing. In return, the hotel offers modest perks, encouraging conscious guest participation. The primary objective was to reduce water, energy, and chemical consumption, curtail laundry volumes, and raise eco-awareness among guests and staff alike. From a social perspective, it fosters responsible consumer habits and engages guests in collective environmental stewardship. Economically, it optimizes resource allocation and streamlines hotel housekeeping workflows.

The initiative received enthusiastic feedback, with a steadily growing number of guests choosing to forgo daily room servic. The hotel's experience shows that guests gladly join eco-initiatives when they are voluntary, easy to understand, and do not compromise stay comfort.

Conclusions

- **Small changes can deliver significant results** – measures that do not require major financial investment can reduce resource consumption and operating costs.
- Guests happily participate in eco-initiatives when the purpose is clear and participation is optional.
- **Voluntary participation and positive incentives** are more effective than imposing mandatory solutions.
- The example of Arche Hotel Tobaco can inspire other accommodation providers and event organisers wishing to begin implementing ESG principles through simple, easy-to-apply solutions.

Case 2

NeuroEvents – Designing Events Around People, Not Stimuli. Neuro Events. Presenter: Katarzyna Krawczyńska



Key elements of the presentation

The **NeuroEvents** presentation introduced a new approach to designing business events, based on knowledge of neuroscience and how the human brain functions. Its central premise is to move away from events overloaded with stimuli in favour of experiences that support participants' concentration, comfort and well-being. The concept's creators emphasise that NeuroEvents is not a passing trend, but a response to participants' changing needs and the meetings industry's evolving standards.

Data indicates that approximately **15–20%** of the population exhibits neurodivergent traits, meaning as many as **1 in 6 event participants** may require sensory accommodations. Furthermore, younger demographics increasingly disengage from overstimulating event formats. This clearly indicates that event design should consider the needs of diverse audience groups.

Conclusions

- **Modern events should be designed around people**, their cognitive abilities and well-being, rather than focusing solely on visual effects.
- **Sensory well-being and neurodiversity are essential components of sustainable event design**, within ESG's social pillar.
- **Simple measures**—such as dedicated quiet zones, simplified signage, and structured breaks—**dramatically improve delegate comfort.**
- Designing sensory-friendly environments expands event accessibility, inclusivity, and overall delegate satisfaction while building brand equity.
- The example of NeuroEvents shows that the future of the MICE industry lies in **more conscious, inclusive events focused on participants' actual needs**, where success is measured not by the number of attractions, but by the quality of the experience.
- The good practices presented included solutions that can be implemented without significant financial investment. These include conducting **a sensory audit of the event space**, creating **quiet and recovery zones**, simplifying visual communication, scheduling breaks appropriately and training staff in the needs of neurodivergent people and accessibility principles.

Case 3

Modern Team-Building that Reveals the city and Drives Sustainability
TamTu. Presenter: Dominika Śliwińska



Key Elements of the Presentation

TamTu presented an innovative approach to corporate team-building and incentive events using a proprietary mobile application in urban settings. Replacing traditional team-building formats, delegates explore the city through an interactive urban game that fuses technology, teamwork, and local heritage. Designed for corporate clients, MICE agencies, hotels, and municipalities, the platform can be customized to match specific organizer goals and ESG values.

The app eliminates printed paper materials, requires no coach transfers, encourages walking, and utilizes existing urban infrastructure. Delegates average around **12,000 steps** per event while discovering local history and attractions. Organizers receive custom game scenarios and post-event analytical reports

Conclusions

- **Technology can support sustainability** by replacing printed materials with digital solutions and reducing the need for additional infrastructure.
- **Theurban landscape acst as natural event venue**, allowing participants to discover local attractions, history and culture in an engaging way.
- Cooperation with local partners strengthens the regional economy and creates value for the entire destination ecosystem.
- Combining walking, team-bonding and wellness elements demonstrate that business objectives and delegate health can be seamlessly aligned.

Key Conclusions

- **Sustainability in MICE extends beyond environmental protection to encompass delegate well-being, accessibility, neurodiversity, and human-centred design.**
- **Cross-sector collaboration among hotels, agencies, cultural bodies, municipalities, and local vendors is vital to building a competitive destination offer for Łódź.**

Results of Group Breakout Sessions

Participants collaborated in breakout groups of 4–5 representatives spanning diverse tourism fields. Each group received a detailed task brief to design a complete, sustainable event concept (selecting from a conference, executive meeting, corporate training session, outdoor team-building trip, or international incentive programme).

Based on guided criteria, teams developed mini-proposals featuring:

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TOP 5 Regional attractions and products Recommended by workshop participants

Central Museum of Textiles (*Centralne Muzeum Włókiennictwa*) + Creative Workshop

Exploring Łódź's textile heritage serves as a launchpad for collaborative group projects, where delegates create a shared art installation or symbolic group artefact.

"The Łódź Thread Trail" (*Szlak Łódzkiej Nitki*) – Urban Game & Design Finale

An urban quest exploring textile heritage, culminating in a hands-on workshop designing apparel alongside students from Łódź art academies (ASP / AHE).

Exclusive Dinner in the Orientarium Ocean Tunnel

An extraordinary gala dinner set inside the underwater tunnel at Zoo Łódź Orientarium, surrounded by marine life.

"Taste of Łódź" – Local Artisanal Coffee Masterclass

Incorporating boutique local roasteries for sensory coffee tastings and conversations with regional entrepreneurs.

"Hollywood in Łódź" (*HollyŁódź*) – Cinematic Heritage & Filmmaking Workshop

Leveraging Łódź's UNESCO City of Film status with visits to the Film Museum (*Muzeum Kinematografii*), location tours, and hands-on film production workshops where teams produce their own short scene.

Industry Discussions & Strategic Insights

- **Economic Considerations:** Costs remain a perceived barrier to eco-friendly solutions, underscoring the need to highlight long-term operational savings.
- **Untapped MICE Potential:** Łódź possesses rich venue infrastructure and green event tools that require more aggressive market promotion.
- **Overcoming Image Challenges:** Outdated post-industrial stereotypes must be actively countered by highlighting Łódź's modern creativity, culture, and urban revitalisation.
- **Targeted PR & Storytelling:** Marketing must focus on authentic local narratives, creative human stories, and successful ESG case studies.
- **"Łódzkość" (Łódź-ness) as a Differentiator:** Compactness, intimacy, and seamless connectivity allow venues, culture, gastronomy, and events to blend effortlessly within close physical proximity.

ŁÓDŹ EXPERIENCE – what brings it all together

The greatest potential of these proposals lies in their compactness and authenticity. A single programme can combine: heritage → creativity → local gastronomy → culture → team-building → positive impact. This can become Łódź's competitive advantage in the MICE market: not the scale of its attractions, but the ability to combine many different experiences within a compact, easily accessible area.

Local Regional Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas

ŁÓDŹ CITY OF FILM TRAIL

A ready-made tourism product leading through locations associated with the most important films made in Łódź. For decades, the city was a production centre for Polish films and television series. A cinematic narrative makes it possible to present Łódź not only as an "industrial city", but as a **city of creators, sets and stories.** Visitors can follow in the footsteps of films including „Ziemia obiecana", „Ida", „Powidoki", „Tango" and „Zimna wojna".

Film Museum in Łódź

Poland's unique museum dedicated to cinematic history, props, set designs, and animation heritage.

Łódź Film School – The Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School

Founded in 1948, the school has educated iconic Polish directors and actors, including Andrzej Wajda, Roman Polański, Krzysztof Kieślowski and Janusz Gajos. Its famous staircase has become one of the symbols of cinematic Łódź.

Orientarium ZOO Łódź

One of Łódź's most distinctive contemporary attractions. It offers extensive opportunities for creating events: dinner in the ocean tunnel, evening tours or educational programmes. It is an example of **a modern MICE product created in Łódź**, rather than another standard event venue.

Wólczanka

A brand strongly associated with Łódź's textile and clothing heritage. Today, it operates as part of Vistula Group, but its roots in Łódź provide a compelling element of storytelling about the city's industrial identity.

“Taste of Łódź” – zalewajka łódzka: the region’s culinary heritage

Łódź’s most distinctive soup, made with rye sourdough and potatoes, often with the addition of sausage. It has a strong history connected with working-class Łódź. The **Zalewajka Lodz Trail** comprises approximately forty restaurants.

Prażoki

A dish associated with Łódź’s working-class culinary tradition, made from potatoes and often served with cabbage or meat accompaniments.

Summary

Łódź does not need to compete on sheer scale to capture MICE market share. Its competitive edge lies in telling its story effectively while leveraging its inherent compact footprint, industrial heritage, vibrant creativity, and community-driven ESG model.






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TamTu – nowoczesna i odpowiedzialna integracja w przestrzeni miejskiej
TamTu


destination
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NAJWAŻNIEJSZE ASPEKTY
PLANOWANIA WYDARZENIA
destination
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3



3.6. WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Katowice, 08.06.2026, Mercure Katowice Centrum Hotel

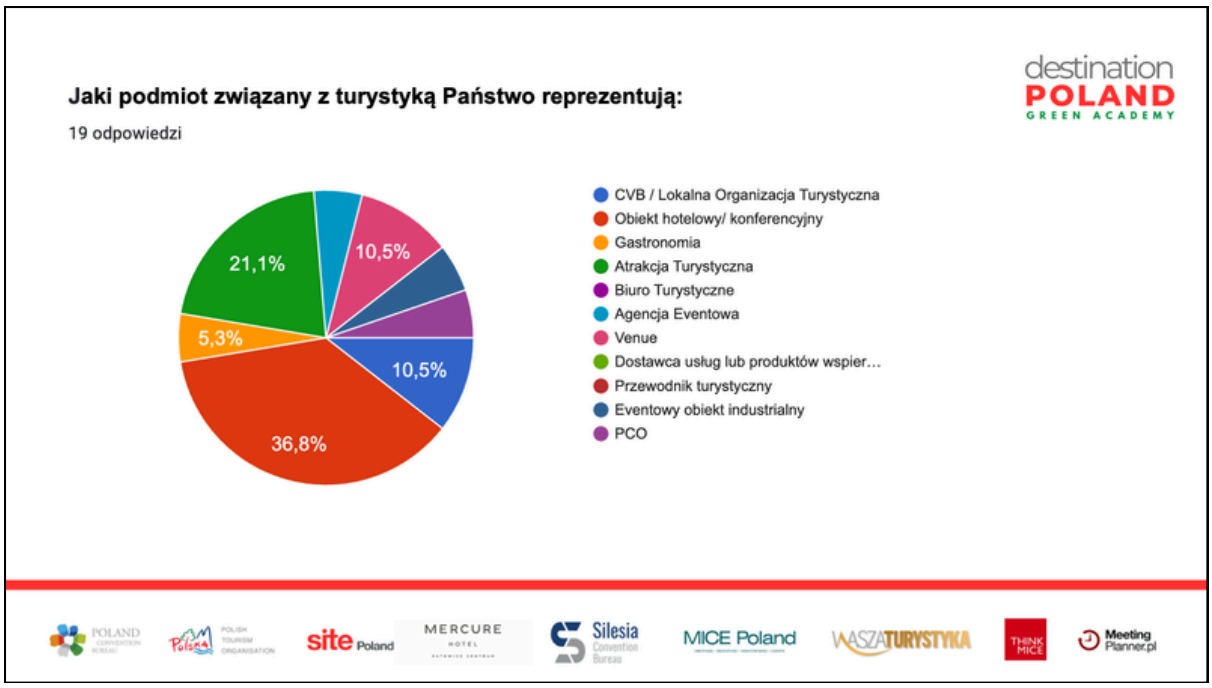


The meeting brought together 20 representatives of the region's MICE industry: service providers, hotels, tourist attractions, catering businesses, vineyards, event and conference venues, and tourism service providers.

Dominika Wojniak and **Sebastian Gronet**, representatives of **Silesian Convention Bureau**, attended the meeting and provided organisational support.

Survey – Data and Key Findings

The survey conducted among participants in the Destination Poland Green Academy workshop shows that the local tourism and MICE industries recognise the importance of sustainability, but are at different stages of its practical implementation. Participants primarily recognise the business dimension of sustainability.



Summary of survey findings

The level of organisational engagement is relatively high – **57.1% are taking their first steps, while 42.9% regularly implement sustainability-related solutions**. At the same time, there is a visible **gap between taking action and formally structuring it**. Nearly half of the organisations (**47.6%**) do not have a formal ESG policy, while only **14.3%** have one. A further **19%** are currently developing one.

Environmental measures clearly dominate among organisations implementing specific initiatives, accounting for **85.7% of responses**. Social, educational and cultural heritage protection activities also play an important role, each cited by **57.1% of respondents**. This demonstrates a gradual broadening of the approach to sustainability – from environmental issues alone towards the **social and cultural impact of tourism**.

Key conclusion

The survey shows that awareness and readiness for change are greater than the level of formal ESG implementation. It is particularly encouraging that sustainability is being viewed more broadly – not only as **environmental protection**, but also as **support for local communities, education, heritage conservation and the development of a responsible tourism model**.

Good Practices from the Region

Participants explored four local case studies of good practices:

- **Mercure Katowice Centrum –** modern environmentally friendly technological solutions
- **Hotel Crystal Mountain Wisła –** building shared responsibility for the local environment
- additionally, in the form of an improvised presentation: **Chata Olimpijczyka Jasia i Helenki** and **Tyskie Browary**

Case 1

A Hotel that Breathes Greenery – Mercure Katowice Centrum as Model Sustainable Venue.
Presenter: Agnieszka Węgrzyn-Chwiłkowska



Key Elements of the presentation

Mercure Katowice Centrum implements the "Green and Clean" strategy, in which sustainability is an integral part of the hotel's operations. The property combines modern technological solutions with environmental and social responsibility, actively participating in Katowice's green transformation.

In the environmental area, the hotel has implemented a range of solutions to reduce energy and natural resource consumption. These include **the largest green wall in Katowice, featuring more than 11,000 plants, a photovoltaic system and a rainwater recovery system used to irrigate greenery**. The property continuously monitors water consumption, reduces its environmental footprint through electromobility solutions (electric vehicle charging stations and electric bicycles), and **uses furnishings made from natural and recycled materials**. Reducing plastic consumption is another important element, achieved through measures including the introduction of glass bottles, wooden room key cards and environmentally friendly packaging. The hotel also segregates waste and implements measures to reduce food waste.

In the social area, Mercure Katowice Centrum consistently **builds relationships with the local community.** It cooperates with local suppliers, supports charitable organisations, donates furnishings to shelters for women and children, participates in city clean-up campaigns and supports an animal shelter. At the same time, it promotes Silesian culture and local heritage, reflected in the hotel's interior design, food and beverage offer, and communications.

In terms of governance, the hotel applies a **transparent organisational model, ensuring equal pay, employee skills development and well-being programmes.** High ethical standards and workplace safety are also fundamental to the team's operations.

The effectiveness of the adopted strategy is confirmed by numerous distinctions and certifications, including Green Key, LEED Platinum certification, an MP Power Awards distinction and finalist status in the Hotel Profit Awards.

Conclusions

Mercure Katowice Centrum demonstrates that sustainability is not a single initiative, but a comprehensive approach to managing a property. Integrating environmental, social and governance considerations creates tangible value for both guests and the local community.

Case 2

Together for the Planet and the Power of Collective Action. Environmental Responsibility Begins with Eeople
Hotel Crystal Mountain in Wisła. Presenters: Mariusz Bujok and Dominika Romanowicz



Key Elements of the Presentation

Hotel Crystal Mountain demonstrates that effective ESG initiatives do not always require costly investments; employee engagement and building shared responsibility for the local environment play a key role. A good example is the **Earth Day campaign, during which more than 20 hotel employees took part in cleaning the surrounding area**. The initiative had environmental, team-building and educational dimensions, raising the team's environmental awareness and improving cooperation between departments. The campaign resulted in nearly 50 bags of waste being collected and the development of a repeatable model for organising similar initiatives in future years, with plans to expand it to include local institutions, residents and business partners.

In its daily operations, the hotel also **implements solutions to reduce energy and resource consumption**, such as intelligent lighting controls, using its own water sources to maintain green areas, water-saving tap aerators, a responsible laundry policy, electric vehicle charging stations, the Zero Waste programme, a modern waste management system, heat recovery and reduced energy consumption at night.

Conclusions

Crystal Mountain implements ESG in a practical and consistent manner, combining everyday operational solutions with initiatives that engage people. As a result, these activities are not only environmentally effective, but also genuinely strengthen the hotel's organisational culture.

Results of Group Breakout Sessions

Participants worked in several groups of 4–5 people representing diverse areas of expertise within tourism. The groups received detailed tasks. The brief required them to plan a complete event (one of the following: a conference, business meeting, corporate training session, corporate team-building event or incentive programme for international guests) and included guidelines and requirements that the proposal had to meet. Based on selected criteria and distinguishing features, participants developed a **mini-proposal for a sustainable event** (a meeting, conference, team-building event or incentive programme for an international group).

The proposal included:

- The event name (theme) and venue
- Key sustainability elements (location, catering, materials, transport, CSR and attractions)
- Keywords highlighting environmental/sustainability aspects

The teams:

- planned an event incorporating sustainable event principles
- identified local assets that could build the destination's competitive advantage
- highlighted ESG differentiators

The breakout sessions produced four original MICE event concepts, each featuring distinct themes, supplier partnerships, and regional experiences. All projects proved that sustainability delivers a genuine competitive advantage for a destination, while responsible asset usage creates engaging, valuable, and unique experiences for business event delegates.

TOP 5 Regional Attractions and Products
Recommended workshop participants

Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park in Chorzów (Górnośląski Park Etnograficzny) – Nature, Tradition and Well-being in One Place

This venue combines local heritage with opportunities for well-being and team-building. It offers an attractive setting for outdoor dinners surrounded by nature, forest bathing, energy-focused wellness sessions, firewalking as a team-building activity, and wreath-making workshops led by local Rural Women' s Associations (Koła Gospodyń Wiejskich). It can also host a wide range of activities showcasing regional traditions, crafts and local culture.

Wisła – An Active Incentive Programme with a Strong Local Identity

The Beskids were identified as an excellent destination for incentive groups looking for outdoor activities combined with authentic regional experiences. Key programme elements include hiking along Beskid trails, a visit to Chata Olimpijczyka, and opportunities to discover local products, cuisine and traditions.

Porcelain Factory (Fabryka Porcelany) - Bringing Post-Industrial Spaces Back to Life

Revitalised industrial sites are among Katowice's most distinctive assets. A standing reception at Fabryka Porcelany demonstrates how historic industrial spaces can be successfully transformed into contemporary business event venues. Its key strengths include distinctive post-industrial architecture, modern event facilities and its role as a strong example of responsible urban regeneration.

The Silesian Museum – Culture as Part of the Delegate Experience

The Silesian Museum combines the region's history and identity with a contemporary approach to hosting events. Its main advantages include its striking architecture on the site of a former coal mine, the opportunity to organise business events in a unique cultural setting, and the chance for delegates to explore the history and heritage of the region as part of their event experience.

Katowice as a "15-minute MICE Destination"

One of the region's most frequently highlighted strengths was Katowice's compact urban layout. Most hotels, attractions, restaurants and conference venues are located within easy reach of one another, allowing events to be organised with minimal transfer times. For organisers, this offers a number of practical benefits: more time for delegates, lower transport-related CO_2 emissions, simpler logistics and the ability to combine several experiences within a seamless event programme.

This combination of **local character, accessibility, cultural heritage, nature and social responsibility** makes Katowice and the Upper Silesian region an attractive destination for sustainable business events.

Local Brands and Corporate Gift Ideas

ING Hubs Poland (Katowice)– Modern Silesia and New Technologies

Katowice is one of the key locations of ING Hubs Poland, an international technology and business services centre. Its presence reflects the wider transformation of Silesia from a region traditionally associated with heavy industry into a modern centre for technology, innovation and business.

Browar Zamkowy Cieszyn - Brewing Heritage Since 1846

Browar Zamkowy Cieszyn is one of Poland's oldest breweries, with a brewing tradition dating back to 1846. It combines long-established heritage with contemporary brewing craftsmanship and is one of the region's most recognisable brands.

Koniaków Lace (Koronka Koniakowska) – Beskid Craftsmanship

Handmade lace from Koniaków is one of Poland's best-known traditional crafts and a distinctive symbol of Beskid heritage. Its unique character and strong regional identity also make it an attractive premium gift for international visitors and business delegates.

Chata Olimpijczyka Jasia i Helenki (Wisła) – Flavours of the Beskids

Chata Olimpijczyka is a well-known restaurant and local brand promoting regional cuisine, preserves, honey and other food products from the Beskids. The venue is also closely associated with the history and achievements of Polish Olympians, giving it an additional cultural and sporting dimension.

Wisła – Winter Sports and the Adam Małysz Legacy

For many years, Polish ski jumper Adam Małysz has played an important role in raising the profile of Wisła and the Beskids. The Adam Małysz Ski Jump and other locations associated with his sporting career form an important part of the region's incentive and sports tourism offer.

The Silesian Tastes Culinary Route (Szlak Kulinarny Śląskie Smaki)

The Silesian Tastes Culinary Route is one of the flagship culinary brands of the Silesian Voivodeship. It is a certified network of restaurants serving authentic dishes representing the culinary traditions of Silesia, the Beskids, the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland and the Zagłębie region. It is one of the region's leading tourism products and has received recognition from both the Polish Tourism Organisation and the European Commission.

Guido Mine (Kopalnia Guido), Zabrze – Industrial Heritage in a Contemporary Format

Guido Mine is one of the region's most recognisable industrial tourism attractions and one of Europe's best-known post-industrial visitor experiences. It hosts conferences, gala dinners and corporate events, as well as unusual activities including underground golf and immersive experiences inspired by the working life of miners. The venue offers a contemporary and engaging way of presenting Silesia's industrial heritage to business and leisure visitors alike.

Industry Discussion and Stategic Insights

The meeting concluded with a panel discussion moderated by the facilitators. The Destination Poland Green Academy workshops in Katowice provided not only an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills, but also, importantly, a forum for open discussion about the region's future as a sustainable MICE destination.

Participants agreed that Silesia has significant potential and that this potential should be developed, communicated and promoted more effectively.

Key Conclusions

Katowice and the Silesian Voivodeship have the potential to compete successfully with leading MICE destinations in Poland and across Europe. One of the key challenges, however, remains the continued repositioning of the region: from a destination traditionally associated primarily with heavy industry to one recognised as modern, green and attractive for business events.

- **Sustainability should become one of the pillars of city and regional promotion.** ESG principles, local identity, cultural heritage and well-being all have the potential to become important distinguishing features of the Katowice and Silesian MICE offer.
- **There is a need for regular industry meetings.** Participants noted that the workshops created a valuable space for networking, sharing good practices and building new business partnerships.
- **The workshops provided the momentum for new initiatives.** Many participants emphasised that they left the workshops with practical ideas and clearly defined actions that could be introduced within their own organisations. The knowledge and inspiration gained during the sessions therefore have the potential to lead to tangible changes in day-to-day business practice..

Summary

One of the most important outcomes of the workshops was the creation of a sense of community around sustainability. The discussion demonstrated that the region's future depends not only on individual initiatives, but above all on cooperation between local authorities, venues, attractions, event organisers and local businesses. Partnership, knowledge sharing and the coordinated promotion of Silesia's strenght can provide a solid foundation for building a strong, distinctive and internationally competitive MICE destination.














DYSKUSJA
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Bariery
Potencjał
Współpraca
Potrzeby
destination POLAND



4 GREEN TALKS – INSPIRING TALKS ABOUT A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE MICE INDUSTRY

Green Talks is an original concept **created by DPGA trainers and SITE Poland members, Grażyna Grot-Duziak and Beata Koziarska**. It is an interview series produced as part of SITE Poland's CSR & Sustainability educational initiatives, published on the Association's website and social media channels, and incorporated as a core component of the **Destination Poland Green Academy** project.

The objective of this initiative is **to showcase best practices and inspire the meetings industry to integrate sustainability principles into daily operations**. The series forms one of the central pillars of the project, alongside the educational workshops and the e-book publication.

Each episode was recorded in a host city of the Destination Poland Green Academy workshops, featuring local industry leaders—representatives of convention bureaux, hotels, tourist attractions, conference venues, and organisations actively implementing solutions aligned with ESG principles and sustainable business tourism. These conversations highlighted concrete operational examples that can serve as an inspiration for other destinations and event organisers.

Green Talks focuses primarily on **practical, hands-on experience.** The interviewees discussed how they leverage local heritage, collaborate with regional partners, mitigate the environmental impact of events, engage local communities, and deliver meaningful experiences for meeting and incentive travel delegates.

The Green Talks series remains a lasting legacy of the Destination Poland Green Academy project, establishing a library of best practices that supports the growth of responsible business tourism and promotes Poland as a modern, conscious, and sustainable MICE destination.

As part of the Destination Poland Green Academy project, **7 interviews were produced:**

- **4.1. Episode #21:** Rafters' Passion on the Vistula
- **4.2. Episode #22:** Premium Poland at WOWLand: Authenticity in the Spirit of Sustainability
- **4.3. Episode #23:** Building Sustainable Venue Credibility on Hard Data
- **4.4. Episode #24:** The "Green Events" Strategy at MTP Group
- **4.5. Episode #25:** Ecology of the Mind: Participant Well-being as the Future of Responsible Business
- **4.6. Episode #26:** Mercure Katowice Centrum: A Systemic Approach to ESG
- **4.7. Episode #27:** Where Flavours Tell a Story – *Chata Olimpijczyka Jasia i Helenki* in Wisła

4.1. Rafters' passion on the Vistula River

Grażyna Grot-Duziak spoke with Jakub Gołębiewski, owner of Fundacja Wolna Wisła and a participant in the Bydgoszcz workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Jakub Gołębiewski shows how sustainable tourism can grow out of passion, authenticity and long-term commitment. The tradition of rafting on the Vistula has become not only an appealing tourism experience, but also a powerful tool for education, raising environmental awareness and preserving local heritage.

A key message from the interview is that responsible tourism does not necessarily require major investment. It can begin with making thoughtful use of local assets, working closely with the surrounding community and creating meaningful experiences for visitors.

Success is built gradually through perseverance, openness to change and a clear long-term vision.

Key Insights

- Passion and authenticity can provide a strong foundation for an innovative tourism product.
- Sustainability is rooted in respect for nature, local history and the community.
- Experiential learning can build environmental awareness more effectively than messaging alone.
- Local heritage can become both a competitive advantage and a distinctive feature of a destination.

Key takeaway

Long-term success requires patience, consistency and collaboration between businesses, local authorities and residents.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-a-boatmans-passion-on-the-vistula-river/

4.2. Premium Poland at WOWLand: authenticity with sustainability at its heart

Beata Koziarska spoke with Majka Szura, co-owner of POLKA TRAVEL and a participant in the Kielce workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Majka Szura, creator of WOWland, shows that Poland's regions can offer premium travel experiences without compromising authenticity or responsibility.

The project was launched during the pandemic, when international travel restrictions encouraged people to rediscover destinations closer to home. It soon developed into a more conscious exploration of the richness of Poland's regions — their people, flavours, crafts and stories.

WOWland creates experiences around what is genuinely local: family-run businesses, vineyards, regional cuisine, traditional crafts and encounters with local makers. Rather than focusing on mass tourism, the concept places emphasis on small-scale experiences, slow travel, well-being and meaningful connections with the destination.

Key Insights

- **Authenticity is the new luxury** – local stories, people and traditions can create a basis for a premium tourist product.
- A sustainable programme begins with local partners and short supply chains.
- Tourism can simultaneously deliver exceptional experiences and provide tangible support for the local economy.
- Poland's regions have significant potential in slow travel, well-being and premium tourism.
- The greatest value lies not in the "attraction" itself, but in meeting people and taking their stories home.
- Regional development requires a shared narrative, cooperation and consistent quality standards.

Key takeaway

There is no need to travel to the other side of the world in search of the 'wow factor'. It can often be found much closer to home — provided we know how to tell a local story, maintain quality and invite visitors to become part of the experience.

WOWland shows that sustainability need not be seen as a limitation. On the contrary, it can be a way of creating a more distinctive, personal and meaningful travel experience.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-poland-premium-with-wowland-authenticity-in-the-spirit-of-sustainability/

4.3. Building sustainable venue credibility on hard data

Grażyna Grot-Duziak spoke with Magdalena Gałka, Deputy Director for Administration and Marketing at LUBLIN CONFERENCE CENTRE and a participant in the Lublin workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Magdalena Gałka, Deputy Director for Administration and Marketing at Lublin Conference Centre, demonstrates that sustainability can be an integral part of managing a modern conference venue. From the outset, LCC has based its operations on three pillars: the environment, the community and responsible governance, combining technological solutions with care for people and the local region.

The interview's key message is that the credibility of a sustainable venue is built on specific measures and measurable results rather than declarations alone. Effective energy and water management, waste reduction, digitalisation, zero waste and the use of smart technologies can go hand in hand with participant comfort and economic efficiency.

LCC also demonstrates that investing in people should be regarded as part of a wider ESG strategy. A stable in-house team allows processes to be controlled more effectively and increases employee engagement while, as the example of LCC shows, also delivering measurable savings. The venue's strong regional roots and cooperation with the local community remain equally important.

Key Insights

- Sustainability should be part of day-to-day management rather than merely an additional marketing activity.
- Technology and data make it possible to translate ESG principles into specific, measurable results.
- Environmental responsibility can support delegate comfort, service quality and financial efficiency at the same time.
- A committed in-house team can be one of the most important elements of an effective sustainability strategy.
- Responsible events are created through everyday decisions: from managing energy and water, reducing printing and waste, to optimising catering.
- Working with the local community increases the positive impact of events on the region and strengthens local identity.

Key Takeaway

Long-term success in sustainable MICE requires consistency, measurable outcomes and a commitment to taking 'smart, small steps'. It is the cumulative effect of these actions that makes it possible to create a venue that is environmentally friendly, people-centred and commercially viable.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-lublin-conference-centres-esg-strategy/

4.4. The "Green Events" Strategy at MTP Group

Beata Koziarska spoke with Magdalena Hołowińska of MTP Group, a participant in the Poznań workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Magdalena Hołowińska of MTP Group explains that a sustainable event starts not with the word "green", but with measurement, data and informed decisions. The ICCA Central European Chapter Meeting in Poznań, attended by 77 people from 20 countries, demonstrated that even a relatively small event can be planned in a way that enables its impact to be measured and specific conclusions to be drawn for the future.

Local sourcing also played an important role. Working with regional suppliers, shortening supply chains and using local products can reduce environmental impact while also improving organisational flexibility and efficiency.

The interview also highlights that transformation does not need to happen overnight. Plant-based menus, waste reduction, reusing event structures and better energy management can all be introduced gradually, taking into account the nature of the event and participants' expectations.

Key insights

- Calling an event 'green' is not enough — its impact needs to be measurable.
- Data supports better decision-making and can help organisations control costs.
- Local sourcing can be an operational advantage rather than a constraint.
- Sustainable solutions are most effective when introduced gradually and with the involvement of all stakeholders.
- Solutions tested successfully at smaller events can later be scaled up to congresses attended by thousands of delegates.
- The future of the MICE industry lies in measurability, transparency and the consistent reduction of environmental impact.

Key takeaway

A truly sustainable event is created not by one spectacular change, but by dozens of informed, data-driven decisions.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-24-the-green-events-strategy-at-grupa-mtp/

4.5. Ecology of the mind: participant well-being as the future of responsible business

Beata Koziarska spoke with Katarzyna Krawczyńska, co-founder of BRANDATION / NEURO EVENTS and a participant in the Łódź workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Katarzyna Krawczyńska suggests that the future of events does not have to mean more content, a faster pace or increasingly intense experiences.

Instead, event design is placing greater emphasis on people's actual needs and capabilities: their attention span, need for recovery, sensory comfort and sense of safety. The NeuroEvent approach represents a shift in thinking. Rather than asking only, 'What are we going to prepare?', organisers should also ask, 'What do we want participants to take away from the event?'

A carefully considered agenda, appropriate lighting and acoustics, well-designed spaces, breaks, catering and opportunities to recharge are not simply added extras. They directly influence whether participants are able to listen, retain information, engage fully and build meaningful relationships.

Key insights

- Less can be more: a well-paced event can be more effective than one built around constant intensity.
- We should design the experience, not simply the programme. What matters is what participants feel, understand and remember.
- Recovery time is part of effective event design, not time wasted.
- Accessibility also includes sensory comfort and neurodiversity, not only physical access.
- Lighting, acoustics, spatial design and catering can directly affect participants' concentration and performance.
- The future belongs to events that are more thoughtful, inclusive and human-centred.
- One of the best ways to understand participants' needs is simply to ask them — ideally before the event itself.

Key takeaway

Do not design an event around the clock and schedule. Design it around people. A successful event does not need to be the most intense. It should be designed well enough to give participants the space to focus, build relationships, reflect and recharge.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-25-ecology-of-the-mind-participant-wellbeing-is-the-future-of-responsible-business/

4.6. Mercure Katowice Centrum: A systemic approach to ESG

Grażyna Grot-Duziak spoke with Agnieszka Węgrzyn-Chwiłkowska, Deputy Manager of Mercure Katowice Centrum



Interview summary

The conversation with Agnieszka Węgrzyn-Chwiłkowska shows that a sustainable hotel is not created through one major investment, but through hundreds of everyday decisions.

At Mercure Katowice Centrum, the 'Green & Clean' approach has become an integral part of hotel management, covering areas ranging from energy and water consumption and food waste reduction to employee engagement and cooperation with the local community.

The hotel demonstrates that environmental responsibility, guest comfort and commercial success can reinforce one another. Green Key and LEED certifications strengthen its credibility, but the most important evidence lies in concrete actions and data that show their real impact.

At the same time, expectations within the MICE market are changing. Clients increasingly look for genuine solutions, emissions measurement and transparent reporting rather than broad sustainability claims. ESG is therefore becoming part of procurement and purchasing decisions, while authenticity remains one of the strongest safeguards against greenwashing

Key insights

- Sustainable development begins with small, everyday decisions.
- People are at the heart of transformation – an engaged team creates lasting change.
- Strong local connections give a hotel authenticity and character.
- Data and measurable results are now more important than declarations alone.
- ESG is increasingly becoming a business requirement rather than an optional extra.

Key takeaway

You do not have to change everything at once. The important thing is to begin — and then keep moving forward, one consistent step at a time.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-26-how-mercure-katowice-centrum-embeds-esg-into-hospitality-and-business-events/

4.7. Where flavours tell a story – Chata Olimpijczyka Jasia i Helenki in Wisła

Grażyna Grot-Duziak spoke with Maria Pietruszka, owner of Chata Olimpijczyka Jasia i Helenki in Wisła and a participant in the Katowice workshop



Interview summary

The conversation with Maria Pietruszka, owner of Chata Olimpijczyka in Wisła, shows that sustainable tourism can begin around the family table.

Here, traditions are passed down from one generation to the next, while family recipes — including a recipe for Wisła-style cabbage soup that is more than 150 years old — have become part of the visitor experience and part of the wider story of the Beskids.

Chata combines authentic regional cuisine with responsible business practices. It works with local producers, reduces food waste and uses seasonal ingredients, solar energy and energy-efficient appliances. Equally important is the creation of experiences through cooperation with local guides, craftspeople and institutions.

Above all, however, the example of Chata shows that sustainable development is driven by people. An engaged team, strong local partnerships and conscious guests ensure that small actions add up to a coherent philosophy for the venue.

Key insights

- Heritage can become a compelling tourism product, particularly when it is authentic and still actively lived.
- Local cuisine does more than feed visitors — it tells the story of a place.
- Cooperation with local producers creates value across the wider region.
- Sustainable development is built from small, everyday decisions.
- The greatest strength of responsible business lies in people and their commitment.
- The future belongs to places that are authentic, rooted in their communities and aware of their wider responsibilities.

Key takeaway

Guests may come for a good meal, but they should leave with a story, a flavour and a lasting memory of the place.

The full interview is available here:
https://meetings.poland.travel/green-talks-27-where-flavour-tells-a-story-chata-olimpijczyka-jasia-and-helenki-in-wisla/

5 RESPONSIBLE INCENTIVE TRAVEL DAY 2026 FROM KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTICE A KEY HIGHLIGHT OF THE DPGA PROJECT



5.1. About the project

The **Responsible Incentive Travel Day 2026** conference, held on **24 April 2026** at the Radisson Collection Hotel in Warsaw, was organised by **SITE Poland** in cooperation with the **Polish Tourism Organisation's Poland Convention Bureau** and incorporated into the **Destination Poland Green Academy** project.

The third edition of SITE Poland's flagship conference, organised on a voluntary basis by members of the Association, brought together representatives of incentive agencies, Convention Bureaux, hotels and DMCs, as well as experts responsible for developing Poland's meetings industry. The conference provided **a valuable platform for exchanging knowledge and experience** while showcasing practical solutions that support the sustainable development of the MICE sector.

site Poland

CONFERENCE

Conference Agenda

Time	Programme	Speakers / Moderation
09:30–10:00	**Participant registration and networking over coffee**	—
10:00–10:05	**Official opening of the event**	—
10:05–10:35	**Opening keynote** "Brain-Friendly Incentive Travel"	*Nina Żukowska*
10:35–11:30	**Session I** People at the Centre of Incentive Experiences — Wellbeing as the New Standard of Sustainable MICE	*Moderator: Grażyna Łukaszyk*
11:40–12:25	**Session II** From Declarations to Results — Turning the SITE Poland Manifesto into a Profitable Incentive Strategy	*Moderator: Emilia Kubik*
12:25–12:40	**Partner presentation**	—
12:40–13:25	**Session III — prepared by Poland Convention Bureau** Hospitality 2.0 — Building Competitive Advantage through Accessibility and a Participant-Centred Approach Gong session	*Moderation and presentation: Aneta Książek* *Gongs: Wojciech Norkowski*
13:25–13:30	**Conference summary**	—
13:30–14:45	**Lunch and networking**	—
14:45–17:45	**AI workshops for the incentive and events industry** Organiser: Laboratorium Twórców PCB/POT	—

The programme may be subject to minor changes.

5.2. Hospitality 2.0 – a new approach to experience design

The original session **"Hospitality 2.0 – Building Competitive Advantage through Accessibility and a Participant-Centred Approach"** was developed by **Aneta Książek, Director of the Poland Convention Bureau at the Polish Tourism Organisation**.

The session's key message was that the competitiveness of today's destinations and event organisers is no longer based solely on modern infrastructure or an attractive location, but above all on the quality of the participant experience.

The session introduced the **Hospitality 2.0** concept, in which accessibility, sensory comfort, inclusivity and participant well-being re treated as integral elements of business event design. Experts emphasised that designing experiences around the diverse needs of participants can lead to higher levels of engagement and satisfaction, while also creating lasting business value.

Low Sensory Show Room

A distinctive feature of the session was the presentation of the **Low Sensory Show Room,** a concept developed by the **Poland Convention Bureau** at the Polish Tourism Organisation.

The space was designed to give participants an opportunity to recharge, reduce sensory overload and improve their comfort during intensive business events.

Participants could not only learn about the project's principles but also experience them in practice during a 'sound bath' session led by **Wojciech Norkowski,** a talented member of the Poland Convention Bureau team, as well as a dedicated demonstration room where the concept could be explored in practice.

Inclusivity as a Part of Sustainable Development

Responsibility in the MICE industry increasingly means not only caring for the environment, but also creating spaces accessible to all event participants. The Low Sensory Show Room is a particularly strong example of this approach, demonstrating how event spaces can be designed to support people with sensory sensitivities.

The concept highlights the importance of thoughtful spatial design, including the reduction of excessive light, noise and visual stimuli, and the creation of calmer environments for neurodivergent participants as well as anyone who may benefit from a lower-sensory setting.

Why is this important?

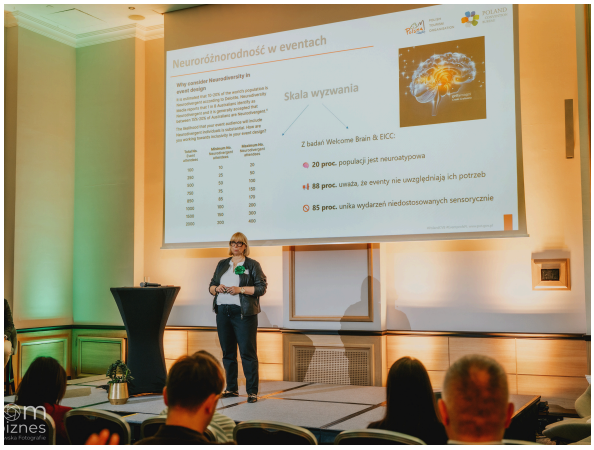
Creating sensory-friendly spaces:

- makes events more accessible,
- supports participant well-being,
- reflects organisers' social responsibility,
- demonstrates that inclusivity is becoming one of the defining principles of modern business events.

Inspiration for the Industry

The Low Sensory Show Room demonstrates that the future of sustainable events lies not only in reducing environmental impact, but also in designing experiences around the diverse needs of participants.

It provides a practical example of how ESG principles can translate into a better event experience, while contributing to a more inclusive and accessible MICE industry.

















The Responsible Incentive Travel Day 2026 conference was a natural part of the Destination Poland Green Academy project. It demonstrated that sustainability in the meetings industry now extends beyond environmental responsibility. It also means taking responsibility for people: their well-being, accessibility and the overall quality of their experience. This "people at the heart of events" approach is shaping the future of modern business events and MICE destinations.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND MARKET NEEDS

The **Destination Poland Green Academy** project was more than a series of educational workshops. It also provided a platform for dialogue between representatives of the MICE industry, local destinations, Convention Bureaux, hotels, visitor attractions and tourism organisations.

Surveys and discussions conducted across the six meetings helped to identify the market's most pressing needs and key priorities for the future development of sustainable business tourism in Poland.

6.1. Key conclusions from the workshops

Second- and third-choice cities have significant untapped potential

- These destinations need stronger communication and more active support from city and regional Convention Bureaux.
- Local attractions can offer distinctive and authentic experiences that are often difficult to replicate in major urban centres.

Workshop participants are ready to collaborate

- There is growing recognition of the value of joint action and coopetition.
- Participants expressed an interest in organising joint study visits with Convention Bureaux.
- There is a shared belief that exchanging information can strengthen the overall quality and competitiveness of a destination's offer.

Local resources can be used to create high-quality incentive programmes

- Traditions, regional products, UNESCO-listed heritage and local craftsmanship provide strong storytelling opportunities.
- Many of the programmes developed during the workshops are ready to be implemented in practice.

Sustainability is becoming a market requirement

- Participants clearly recognise changing client expectations.

- The values highlighted most frequently were authenticity, local identity, responsibility and social impact.

Regional events create long-term value, but they need continuity and strategic direction

- One-off projects are not enough; destinations need long-term strategies and strong place brands.
- Signature events can play an important role in shaping a city's identity and narrative.



6.2. Grassroots initiatives – the power of local communities

One of the strongest themes to emerge from the workshops was the need to build closer relationships between local MICE partners.

Participants emphasised that effective destination promotion depends on cooperation across the entire local ecosystem, including hotels, conference venues, attractions, restaurants, guides, event agencies, DMCs and public-sector institutions.

The workshops showed that local stakeholders are willing to work together, but they need regular opportunities to meet, exchange ideas and jointly develop products and experiences that respond to market demand.

The key needs identified by participants included:

- strengthening cooperation between local partners;
- organising regular industry meetings and forums;

- building stronger regional MICE networks;
- sharing knowledge, experience and best practice;
- developing joint products and offers that draw on the strengths of the wider region.

6.3. Top-down initiatives – the role of leaders and institutions

A second key area identified during the workshops was the need for stronger support from organisations responsible for destination development, particularly Convention Bureaux and tourism organisations.

Participants agreed that Convention Bureaux play a central role as integrators of the local MICE ecosystem. Their responsibilities extend beyond destination promotion to include building a shared development strategy, initiating cooperation between stakeholders and creating a clear and consistent narrative for the destination.

Participants also highlighted the need to:

- continue educational initiatives focused on sustainable development;
- provide practical tools to support the implementation of ESG principles;
- maintain consistent communication around responsible business tourism;
- create effective platforms for cooperation between the public and private sector.

6.4. Key qualitative findings

The workshops confirmed that sustainable development is no longer perceived solely as an obligation arising from ESG policies. Increasingly, it is being recognised as a way to build **competitive advantage and creating more valuable experiences for event participants.**

One of the project's most valuable outcomes was a **deeper understanding of the potential of individual regions.** Participants noted that learning more about other partners' products and services helped them to identify their own strengths, better understand the destination's wider assets and recognise the contribution of other organisations within the local ecosystem.

This perspective supports the development of **coopetition** — a model in which organisations compete in some areas while collaborating in others to grow the market as a whole and strengthen Poland's position as a MICE destination.

A clear shift in client expectations is also evident. Event organisers increasingly seek offers that combine high quality with authenticity and social responsibility. The choice of an event destination is now determined not only by infrastructure and price, but also by the opportunity to create valuable experiences for participants.

The key trends identified during the workshops include:

- the growing importance of authentic local experiences,
- greater use of regional heritage, culture and cuisine,
- the increasing importance of social impact and cooperation with local communities,
- greater personalisation of event programmes based on sustainability principles,
- solutions that achieve an effective balance between cost, efficiency and positive local impact.
- event design centred around participants' needs, including NeuroEvent principles.

Summary

The Destination Poland Green Academy project demonstrated that the future of Poland's MICE industry will depend on **collaboration, education and responsible leadership**. Building strong local partnerships, reinforcing the role of Convention Bureaux and systematically enhancing the skills and capabilities of industry stakeholders will be essential to creating competitive and sustainable business destinations.

The project also confirmed that the greatest value lies in people and their willingness to share knowledge, jointly develop new solutions and build collaborative networks. Initiatives of this kind can help create a modern MICE offer that responds to the demands of today's market while anticipating the expectations of tomorrow's clients.

7 PROJECT STATISTICS AND IMPACT

The **Destination Poland Green Academy** project, developed by SITE Poland on behalf of and in cooperation with the Polish Tourism Organisation's Poland Convention Bureau, was one of Poland's largest educational initiatives dedicated to the sustainable development of the meetings industry. Over the course of several months, the project created a platform for knowledge exchange, building the promoting of the best practices across six regions of the country.

7.1. The project in numbers

Key project delivery indicators:



The project brought together representatives from across the entire MICE industry ecosystem, including:

- incentive and event agencies,
- hotels and conference venues,
- Convention Bureaux,
- local government representatives,
- regional and municipal tourism organisations,
- tourist attractions and cultural institutions,
- DMCs,
- congress centres,

- transport operators and partners,
- service providers to the meetings industry.

The diversity of participants enabled meaningful discussions that reflected a broad range of perspectives and market needs.

7.2. Project impact

One of the greatest strengths of the Destination Poland Green Academy was its ability to create a collaborative platform for meetings industry professionals working across different market segments.

The project demonstrated that shared learning and the exchange of experience can help build lasting partnerships and strengthen the competitiveness of Polish destinations.

The Project's Key Outcomes include:

- strengthening local MICE communities across six regions of Poland;
- raising awareness of sustainable development and the practical application of ESG principles;
- encouraging cooperation between local stakeholders in line with the concept of coopetition;
- showcasing best practice and local products that support the development of responsible events;
- developing participants' skills in designing sustainable business events;
- reinforcing the role of Convention Bureaux as coordinators and integrators of local meetings industry ecosystems;
- creating a lasting knowledge resource in the form of an e-book and educational materials available to the wider industry.

The project delivered not only measurable results in terms of participant numbers and completed activities, but also something of longer-term value: a collaborative network,

new business relationships and practical knowledge that participants can apply when organising future events.

The Destination Poland Green Academy showed that investment in education, collaboration and knowledge exchange is one of the most effective ways to support the development of a competitive, innovative and sustainable MICE industry in Poland.

7.3. Promotional and communication activities of the Destination Poland Green Academy project

Communication around the Destination Poland Green Academy project was designed as a multi-channel information and educational campaign aimed at reaching meetings industry professionals, promoting sustainable development and raising awareness of the project throughout Poland.

A key pillar of the campaign was cooperation with industry media outlets in Poland, as well as one international publication:

- **Think MICE** – publication of workshop announcements, educational posts and materials promoting environmentally friendly solutions.
- **Wasza Turystyka** – articles highlighting local editions of the Academy, including Poznań, and green trends in business tourism.
- **MICE Poland** – coverage of the results of the programme's first edition and the Academy's role in bringing the industry together around the Manifesto for Sustainable Incentive Travel.
- **MeetingPlanner.pl** – features and reports on implementing ESG standards and best practices in the organisation of business events.
- **Kongres Magazine** (international platform) – international promotion of the Polish model of sustainable business tourism ("Destination Poland Green Academy Hosted Across Poland").

As part of this media cooperation, content was produced and published at each stage of the project, including workshop announcements, event reports and summaries of project outcomes. This enabled information about the initiative to reach both MICE professionals and a broader audience interested in the development of sustainable business tourism.

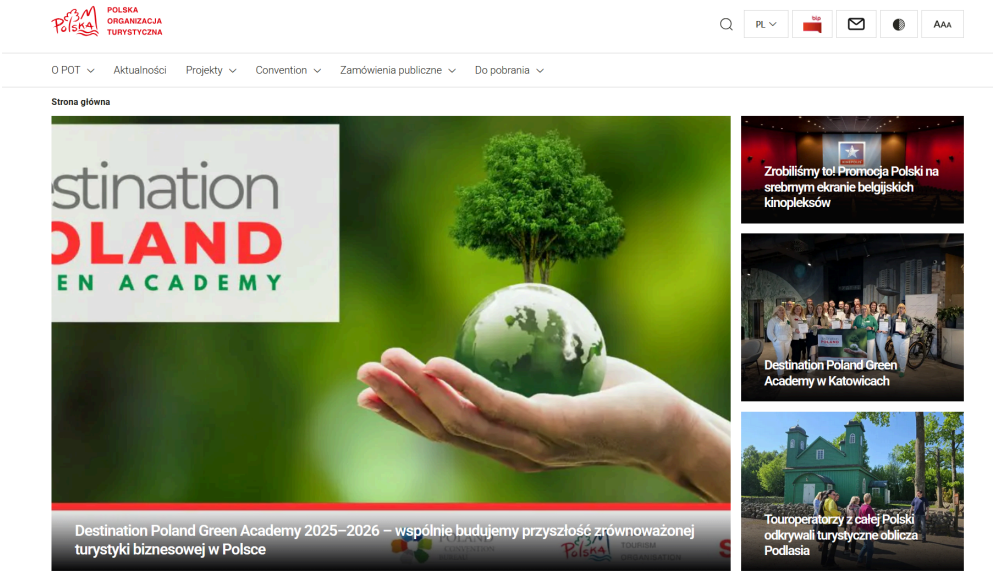
Press releases prepared at various stages of the project were also an integral part of the

communication activities. They provided information about the programme's objectives, partners, workshop proceedings and the outcomes developed by participants.

Another important communication channel was the project's **dedicated** online presence.. Information about the Destination Poland Green Academy was published on the **SITE Poland – Destination Poland** website and on the website of the **Polish Tourism Organisation's Poland Convention Bureau**, making the project accessible to both domestic and international audiences interested in developing a sustainable MICE sector.

Social media also played a significant role, enabling ongoing communication with the industry and the promotion of best practices in sustainable event organisation. Posts, event coverage, photographs and Green Talks interviews were regularly published through the channels of::

- **SITE Poland (Facebook, LinkedIn),**
- **Destination Poland by SITE Poland (LinkedIn),**
- **Polish Tourism Organisation's Poland Convention Bureau,**
- **local Convention Bureaux,**
- **Local Tourism Organisations (LOTs),**
- **project partners.**



The project was supported by a wide range of articles and reports covering different stages and regional editions of the Academy. These included content published by the Poland Convention Bureau, Wasza Turystyka, MICE Poland and Kongres Magazine, as well as reports from workshops held in Bydgoszcz, Kielce, Lublin, Poznań, Katowice and Łódź. Below **are links to several articles:**

POT PCB / PORTAL GŁÓWNY

Inauguracja Projektu 2025–2026

Artykuł wprowadzający: budowanie przyszłości zrównoważonej turystyki biznesowej w Polsce i założenia cyklu.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/destination-poland-green-academy-2025-2026-wspolnie-budujemy-przyszlosc-zrownowazonej-turystyki-biznesowej-w-polsce/

WASZA TURYSTYKA

Poznań Stawia na Zielone Wydarzenia

Relacja branżowa dotycząca odsłony poznańskiej, ekologicznych trendów w MICE oraz lokalnych dobrych praktyk.

https://www.waszaturystyka.pl/poznan-stawia-na-zielone-wydarzenia-kolejna-odslona-destination-poland-green-academy/

MICE POLAND

Podsumowanie I Edycji Programu

Przegląd rezultatów akademii, ocena frekwencji branżowej oraz wpływ warsztatów na standardy organizacji eventów.

https://www.micepoland.com.pl/aktualnosci/0,,,60,strona.html

KONGRES MAGAZINE

Green Academy Hosted Across Poland

Międzynarodowa publikacja promująca polski model zrównoważonych spotkań biznesowych na rynku europejskim.

https://kongres-magazine.eu/2026/06/destination-poland-green-academy-hosted-across-poland

POT PCB / BYDGOSZCZ

Warsztaty w Bydgoszczy

Lokalna odsłona akademii zorganizowana we współpracy z Bydgoszcz Convention Bureau.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news/destination-poland-green-academy-w-w-bydgoszczy#t

POT PCB / KIELCE

Warsztaty w Kielcach

Sprawozdanie z warsztatów w regionie świętokrzyskim skupionych na certyfikacji ekologicznej.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/relacja-z-warsztatu-destination-poland-green-academy-w-kielcach/#t

POT PCB / LUBLIN

Warsztaty w Lublinie

Prezentacja narzędzi redukcji śladu węglowego podczas wydarzeń w województwie lubelskim.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/relacja-z-warsztatu-destination-poland-green-academy-w-lublinie/

POT PCB / POZNAŃ

Edycja Poznańska

Praktyczne aspekty ESG i zrównoważony łańcuch dostaw w branży spotkań w Poznaniu.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/destination-poland-green-academy-w-poznaniu-o-zrownowazonych-wydarzeniach/

POT PCB / KATOWICE

Edycja Śląska (Katowice)

Spotkanie z sektorem MICE na Śląsku w kontekście ekologicznej transformacji obiektów.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/destination-poland-green-academy-w-katowicach/

POT PCB / ŁÓDŹ

Narzędzia ESG w Łodzi

Warsztat poświęcony kalkulacji wskaźników zrównoważonego rozwoju oraz zielonym audytom.

https://www.pot.gov.pl/pl/pcb/news-pl/destination-poland-green-academy-w-lodzi-praktyczne-narzedzia-dla-zrownowazonych-wydarzen/

A particularly valuable aspect of the communication activities was the **ambassador effect** Workshop participants shared their own reports, reflections and comments, helping to pass on the knowledge gained and promote best practice within their professional networks.

This gave the project's message greater authenticity and engagement, extended its reach to additional industry professionals and increased its organic visibility.

The multi-channel communication strategy made the Destination Poland Green Academy not only an educational project, but also a platform promoting a responsible **approach to organising business events and cooperation among stakeholders in the Polish MICE industry.**

Coordinated promotional activity carried out by the organisers, partners, media and participants significantly extended the project's reach, engaged local industry communities and reinforced the message of responsible development within the MICE sector.

Multi-channel communication helped raise awareness of the project and promote knowledge and best practices related to sustainable business events.

8 POST-WORKSHOP EVALUATION SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG PARTICIPANTS

Following the completion of the workshop series, participants were invited to evaluate their experience of the Academy, with surveys conducted between several weeks and several months after each event. The following section presents a detailed **analysis of the participant evaluation survey** conducted as part of the **Destination Poland Green Academy.**

Summary of survey results

1. **Very high level of perceived usefulness**
   A total of 97.2% of participants said they expected to apply the knowledge, experience and inspiration gained during the workshops in their professional work: 55.6% to a great extent and 41.7% to a moderate extent.
2. **Practical implementation of sustainable practices**
   A total of 80.6% of respondents had either already implemented at least one sustainable practice (33.3%) or were in the process of doing so (47.2%). The remaining 19.4% intended to introduce such practices in the future.
3. **Most valued aspects of the workshops**
   According to the detailed survey results, the highest-rated elements were practical examples and case studies (70.83%) and the exchange of experience with other participants (66.67%).
4. **Strong demand for future editions**
   A total of 97.2% of respondents believed that similar industry meetings were needed in their city or region, including 72.2% who considered them very much needed.

Analysis of survey questions and percentage results

Question 1: To what extent do you expect to apply the knowledge, experience and inspiration gained during the workshops in your day-to-day professional work?

Answer	Percentage share
To a great extent	55,56%
To a moderate extent	41,67%
To a limited extent	2,78%

Question 2: Since taking part in the workshops, have you implemented or started implementing at least one practice related to sustainable event organisation?

Answer	Percentage share
I am currently implementing one	47,22%
Yes	33,33%
Not yet, but I plan to	19,44%

Question 3: If yes, please provide a brief example:
(Open-ended question – examples of specific actions reported by participants)

- **Digitalisation and zero waste:** replacing printed guest materials with digital alternatives and choosing more environmentally responsible promotional items.
- **Waste management:** introducing educational signage for waste bins in guest rooms and bathrooms, removing plastic bin liners and organising waste separation at large outdoor events.
- **Business proposals:** clearly communicating environmental measures and sustainability credentials in offers prepared for event organisers and guests.

- **Event proposals and programmes:** introducing low- or no-cost sustainability improvements into proposals and promoting plant-based catering and the BrainFood concept.
- **Environmental education and local partnerships:** expanding environmental education initiatives and developing activities in cooperation with local suppliers, partners and communities.
- **New project development:** embedding sustainability principles into the foundations of new ventures and start-ups.
- **Transport and logistics:** rethinking how event participants are transported.
- **Social impact:** applying CSR principles and supporting the preservation of traditional crafts at risk of disappearing.

Question 4: Which elements of the workshops did you find most valuable?
(Multiple-choice question – participants could select more than one answer)

Workshop element	Percentage share
Practical examples (case studies)	**70,83%**
Exchange of experiences with other participants	**66,67%**
Workshop activities and exercises	**45,83%**
Practical tools and implementation guidance	**33,33%**
Inspiration for sustainable events	**33,33%**

Question 5: How would you assess the need for similar industry meetings on sustainable development in your city or region?

Answer	Percentage share
They are very much needed	72,22%
They are probably needed	25,00%
Difficult to say	2,78%

Question 6: Please share your comments on the workshops (a few sentences)
(Qualitative feedback from participants)

Artur Trukawiński (General Manager of Arche Nałęczów):
"The Destination Poland Green Academy workshops were an extremely valuable experience for me. They were one of those events where theory genuinely meets practice, giving participants an opportunity to exchange first-hand experience of implementing sustainable solutions in the hospitality and MICE industries (...)."

Krzysztof Augustynowicz (Qubus Hotel Bydgoszcz):
"Taking part in the Destination Poland Green Academy was a valuable opportunity to broaden my knowledge of ESG in the hospitality and MICE industries. I particularly appreciated the exchange of experience with representatives of other venues and the chance to learn about practical solutions (...)."

Paweł Świderski (EastTravel.pl):
"This was the first meeting of its kind in Lublin, and I hope it will not be the last. It provided a wealth of knowledge and helped us recognise both how much has already been achieved and how much more there is still to do — and, importantly, that we can do it."

Maria Pietruszka (Chata Olimpijczyka, Wisła):
"These were extremely valuable workshops, demonstrating the importance of exchanging experience and sharing best practice within the tourism industry. The case studies and conversations with other participants provided fresh inspiration and new ideas (...)."

Participants consistently highlighted the **high quality of the content, the welcoming atmosphere and the effective balance between theory and practice**.

Anonymous comments (published with the respondents' consent):

"The meeting was very well prepared and thoughtfully designed. The programme and speakers offered a wealth of inspiration and practical examples from across the industry. Sustainable events and destinations are often discussed at industry meetings, but usually only to a limited extent. Particularly valuable were the practical examples shared by industry representatives and the opportunity to discuss local challenges and opportunities. This regional perspective helps participants understand the issues more clearly and develop solutions together."

"The stories and case studies presented during the Green Academy were extremely valuable. Although I was also able to share an example from my own experience, learning about other perspectives and initiatives across the MICE sector was particularly useful. Some were familiar to me, while others were completely new, but each offered inspiration, prompted reflection or broadened my perspective. It was also a valuable opportunity to reconnect with industry colleagues and take part in a meaningful exchange of experience."

"It was a genuinely inspiring experience. The panels and workshops showed me how important it is to incorporate CSR, environmental responsibility and engagement with local communities into event planning. I now apply these ideas regularly when preparing proposals, and I can see both their positive impact and growing interest from clients."

"The workshops helped us understand where we currently stand as a region and what we can realistically do to turn commitments into action. They also gave us an opportunity to assess whether our venues are capable of meeting sustainability requirements."

“The Destination Poland Green Academy workshops were both valuable and inspiring. The topics were presented in an engaging and practical way, and the knowledge gained can be applied directly in everyday work. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to exchange experience, gain new perspectives on sustainable development and benefit from the professional approach of the facilitators.”

“I appreciated the practical and well-informed approach to sustainable development. Particularly useful were the examples of how solutions can be implemented within individual businesses, along with specific information and inspiration that can be applied in day-to-day operations.”

“The workshops should be repeated to reinforce and update knowledge and skills.”

“We need more meetings that educate and support the industry.”

“The workshop achieved an ideal balance between the quality and value of the content and the time required.”

“Thank you for the welcoming atmosphere and the wealth of inspiration. I am confident that some of these ideas can be put into practice — and every small step forward matters.”

A WORD IN CONCLUSION

Destination Poland Green Academy – a shared vision for the future of business tourism in Poland

Destination Poland Green Academy was much more than a series of educational workshops. It sparked a nationwide conversation about the future of the MICE industry and created a platform for collaboration between representatives of the public sector, private sector and expert communities. The joint work undertaken by participants showed that the transition towards sustainability is no longer optional. It is becoming essential to the continued growth and international competitiveness of Polish destinations.

The project was built around three complementary pillars: the **United Nations 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, **ESG principles**, and the **SITE Poland Sustainable Incentive Travel Manifesto**. By combining global frameworks with practical experience from the Polish market, the project created a distinctive educational model that can provide a foundation for the continued development of responsible business tourism in Poland.

One of the project's most important achievements was to demonstrate that there is no single model for sustainable development. Each region has its own assets, expertise and potential, all of which can contribute to building a distinctive competitive position. The workshops held in six cities showed that both destinations with well-developed business infrastructure and those with strong natural, cultural or educational assets can successfully create offers aligned with ESG principles. Poland benefits from a diverse destination ecosystem whose strength lies in local identity, authenticity and effective collaboration between partners. The project also confirmed that the MICE sector can make a meaningful contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. Of particular relevance are initiatives supporting **sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13)** and **partnerships for the goals (SDG 17)**.

Business events and incentive travel can serve as effective platforms for education, stakeholder engagement and the implementation of responsible practices throughout the industry value chain. Throughout the workshops, participants repeatedly emphasised that ESG is no longer simply a source of competitive advantage. It is increasingly becoming a standard expected by clients, corporations and event organisers. Responsible event design should begin at the concept stage and extend across the entire event journey, from destination and transport choices to venue selection, local partnerships, catering, activities and impact measurement.

Particular attention was given to the role of local suppliers, circular economy principles,

the reduction of transport-related emissions and consistent ESG reporting. One of the project's most valuable outcomes was the opportunity it created for knowledge and experience to be shared across different segments of the market. Hotels, Convention Bureaux, event organisers, visitor attractions, DMCs, public-sector representatives and the academic community worked together to analyse challenges, develop new solutions and build partnerships capable of supporting the long-term development of the sector.

This demonstrated that meaningful industry transformation depends on collaboration and mutual learning. Destination Poland Green Academy also showed that incentive travel can play an important role in advancing sustainable development.

Well-designed incentive programmes can do more than reduce environmental impact. They can support local communities, promote cultural heritage, strengthen local economies and generate lasting positive social outcomes. In this context, incentive travel becomes not simply a tourism product, but a platform for encouraging more responsible choices and behaviours.

Key messages of the project

- **ESG is becoming a new standard for the MICE industry**, influencing how events are planned, delivered and evaluated.
- **Poland has strong potential to develop the Green Destination Poland brand**, drawing on the diversity of its regions, the richness of local experiences and increasing market awareness.
- **Partnerships between the public sector, private sector and academic community are essential to effective transformation**, with collaboration becoming one of the sector's most important development assets.
- **Local identity, authenticity and responsibility will be increasingly important factors in destination competitiveness.**
- **Education remains fundamental to change**, as informed organisers, suppliers and clients are better equipped to implement solutions that respond to the challenges facing today's market.

Recommendations for further market development

The project identified several strategic priorities that could accelerate the development of sustainable business tourism in Poland:

- developing nationwide **Green MICE standards** based on leading Polish and international practice;
- developing certification schemes and event impact reporting frameworks aligned with ESG principles;
- continuing to strengthen industry skills and expertise through educational programmes and the exchange of best practice;
- expanding partnerships between cities, Convention Bureaux, hotels, event organisers and the academic community;
- positioning regional destinations as an important part of Poland's sustainable tourism offer on international markets;
- building a shared **Green Destination Poland** brand based on quality, responsibility and authentic experiences.

Conclusion

Destination Poland Green Academy demonstrated that the future of Poland's MICE industry will depend not only on innovative products and modern infrastructure, but above all on responsible leadership, collaboration and a commitment to continuous learning. The project has helped lay the foundations for a new approach to business tourism development — one that combines economic objectives with responsibility towards people, the environment and local communities.

This is not the end of the project, but the beginning of a shared journey towards a more sustainable future for business tourism in Poland. Through strong partnerships, knowledge exchange and the confidence to implement meaningful change, Poland has the potential to become one of the leading sustainable business tourism and incentive travel destinations in Central and Eastern Europe.



Destination Poland Green Academy leaves behind more than knowledge and recommendations. It has created a community of people who believe that responsibly designed events can have a positive impact on destinations, organisations and participants — and, in doing so, contribute to a more sustainable future for the industry as a whole.

CONTACTS, PARTNERS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

destination POLAND GREEN ACADEMY

WE INVITE YOU to get in touch and explore the offer of the Poland Convention Bureau and local Convention Bureaux:

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Graphics for DPGA, RITD, and Green Talks projects: Marta Pawlicka

Infographics: generated using AI

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