

GDYNIA | ECHO

MONTHLY NEWS FROM **GDYNIA**, POLAND
THE **CITY** MADE OF **DREAMS** AND THE **SEA**

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EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

It is never too late to start sharing good news with the world. And that is what we are doing.

Encouraged by many requests, we have come up with **Gdynia Echo**, a monthly news bulletin keeping you up-to-date with what happened in **Gdynia, Poland**.

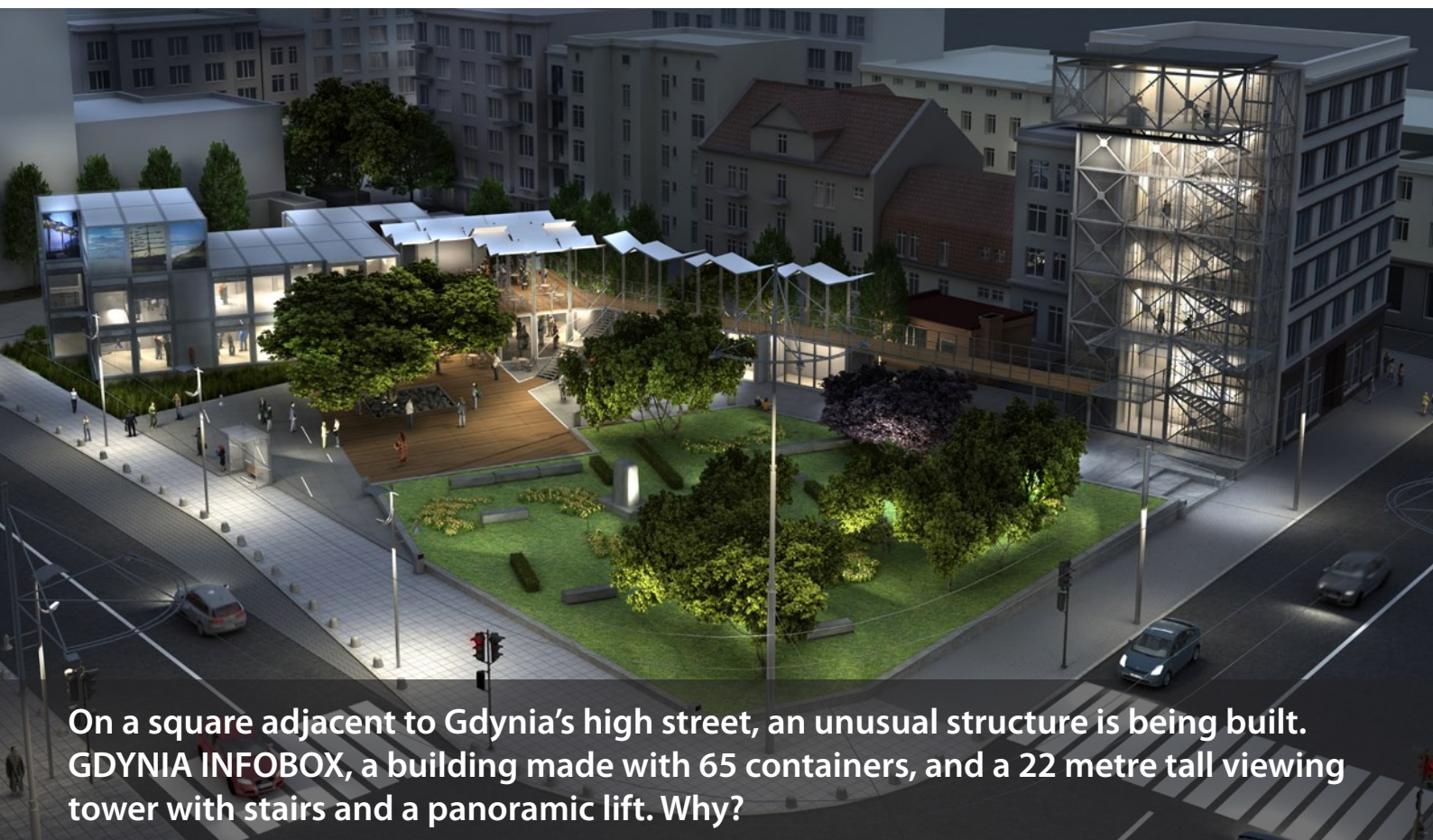
Our beautiful coastal city of 250,000 inhabitants is an arena of various interesting events. Some of them are huge, drawing public counted in thousands, others are small, important to locals only. We carefully choose the best of the both types to compose a mixture of news we think might interest readers all around the globe. We are going to send it to all Polish embassies, consulates, government agendas, foreign correspondents and students in Poland, our twin cities, and to many other places.

We are honest; our aim is to show you why Gdynia is such a wonderful place to visit and live in. A place where 97% of citizens are happy about their city (as one recent survey showed). A place to be.

Enjoy the reading!

Press Office
Gdynia City Hall

GDYNIA INFOBOX GETS ITS SHAPE



On a square adjacent to Gdynia's high street, an unusual structure is being built. GDYNIA INFOBOX, a building made with 65 containers, and a 22 metre tall viewing tower with stairs and a panoramic lift. Why?

Visualisation by Rebel Concept

The main function of GDYNIA INFOBOX is to provide information in a fascinating form on the changes Gdynia will see in the coming years. And the scale of changes will be tremendous.

The most spectacular transformation will be connected with revitalising the huge post-industrial harbour area previously used by shipyards, fishing and fish processing industry. **It is one of the most attractive locations in Poland, surrounded by water from three sides.** The former industrial zone will become the new centre of Gdynia, with restaurants, hotels, shops, offices, residential buildings and also attractive public space. And, there is more!

Gdynia will also host a spectacular project, the **Cultural Forum** (consisting of a Dramatic Theatre, a Modern Art Gallery and a Media Library). **Sea Towers**, the tallest residential building in Poland, will welcome two new neighbours, the head office of **Nordea Bank Polska** and **Courtyard by Marriott Hotel**. Other parts of Gdynia will also see big projects develop.

Apart from GDYNIA INFOBOX, its surrounding area will acquire a new look. The Żeromski Square will see new landscaping and attractive illumination at night. It will become a new meeting place, friendly public space with coffee places and other facilities, to serve both the local people and tourists.

GDYNIA INFOBOX, also called **The Observatory of Changes**, is an unprecedented project in Poland. Infoboxes, that is temporary facilities providing information on future projects, have recently become quite popular in Europe. The idea appeared together with big building projects in the centres of European cities which, while pending, cause significant inconvenience to citizens but aim at creating attractive public space: squares, boulevards and shops (like Berlin's Potsdamer Platz) or residential and office areas (like Hamburg's Hafen City).

The temporary character of infoboxes favours extravagant designs, such as using red or orange for the facade (Hamburg and Berlin) or a roof protruding straight from the ground (Saragossa). The design of GDYNIA INFOBOX will also be unusual.

BARRIER-FREE GDYNIA



Gdynia pays special attention to providing equal opportunities for people with disabilities. Within the frames of its activities in this field, Gdynia organizes a cyclical contest entitled 'Barrier-Free Gdynia'.

Its aim is to distinguish institutions, organizations and individuals whose activities are aimed at overcoming stereotypes concerning the disabled. The Jury rewards the initiatives which contribute to the elimination of architectural, transportation and social barriers complicating everyday life of a disabled person. The 14th edition of the contest has just started, but we already look forward to its final in April.

It is worth mentioning that in December 2012 the **European Commission granted Gdynia with a special distinction within the Access City Award**, which recognizes cities which take exemplary initiatives to improve accessibility in the urban environment. Pictured above are: **Wojciech Szczurek**, Mayor of Gdynia, and **Beata Wachowiak-Zwara**, Mayor's Plenipotentiary on Disabled, in Brussels.

GDYNIA INVITES BIRDS – AN ANNIVERSARY EVENT

For the 15th time already Gdynia is inviting birds to pay a visit! The participants of the contest entitled 'Inviting birds to Gdynia' – both children and adults – are supposed to build the most outstanding bird feeder or a nest box.

During previous editions the organizers have managed to gather more than 3 400 works. The contest's Jury traditionally rewards constructors of the best ones, as well as schools which submit the biggest number of works.

After the competition is finished, feeders and boxes are distributed among volunteers willing to hang them around kindergartens and schools, in parks and forests, as

well as in their own allotments, and – of course – to take care of them afterwards. One box can be in use for 2 to 3 seasons, thus our contest is a truly never ending story.

The main goal of the event is to acquaint the residents with different bird species living in Gdynia and to include the youth in the activities aimed at the environmental protection.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN GDYNIA NOW 100% LOW-FLOOR



Gdynia public transport has entered 2013 in a really impressive, low-floor style! The era of high-floor vehicles has eventually finished – from now on, buses and trolleybuses in the city will be fully accessible.

Courtesy of ZKM Gdynia

It was a symbolic moment for sure, but at the same time – virtually unnoticeable for an average passenger. Till now, low-floor vehicles constituted even more than 97% of the fleet and the remaining three mid-floor Mercedeses and two Jelcz trolleybuses operated on short routes in peak hours only.

Gdynia Transport Authority began to replace the high-floor vehicles with low-floor ones in 1995. First new Jelcz-Mercedes buses appeared on Gdynia streets then.

In 2001 first low-floor trolleybus was introduced. Another important day for Gdynia public transport was June 22nd, 2007, when the last ride of old Ikarus bus took place. After that date, Gdynia public transport became virtually low-floor.

Currently, public transport network in Gdynia is serviced by 328 vehicles (247 buses and 81 trolleys). On January 16th, 2013 two new MAN Lion's City G CNG articulated buses were presented. These are the 15th and 16th natural gas-powered buses in Gdynia respectively.



Photo by Mateusz Skowronek

EVEN MORE OFFICE SPACE IN GDYNIA



Łużycka Plus – this is the name of the next modern A-class office building, which is being built at Łużycka Street in Mały Kack district. The main character of the district has changed significantly over the last several years. Currently, this is a zone of modern sport and office facilities.

Courtesy of Allcon

Located just next to the city centre and easy to get to Mały Kack is a perfect location for an office venue. It may be accessed either on foot (via a footbridge), by car (via Gdynska Route), by bus (thanks to the new terminus) or by train (Rapid Urban Rail stop). Another office investment in the area was just a natural consequence of that. The new building will be located in an impressive neighbourhood – right opposite is the **Łużycka Office Park** complex, where such companies as: **Sony, Geoban, DNV or WNS** are seated. A little bit further, one can spot the office buildings of: **Sanipor, Sportowa Centre, Wart-sila or IMS**, and at the opposite side of the street – glass façade of **Pomeranian Science and Technology Park**.

The four-storey building at 3C Łużycka Street will accommodate offices of total space of 5486,42 square meters. The construction is supposed to be completed in the 4th quarter of 2013.

On January 23rd, 2013 yet another modern office building in Gdynia was put into operation. Nicknamed **The Aquarium**, it is located within the **Baltic Park of New Technologies**. It is a realization of an innovative business project conducted by **Pomeranian Special Economic Zone**, connected with the revitalization of former Gdynia Shipyard premises.

GDYNIA SCHOOLS AMONG THE BEST IN POLAND AND POMERANIA REGION

Gdynia schools ranked high in a prestigious Secondary Schools Ranking announced by 'Perspektywy' magazine and 'Rzeczpospolita' daily. It is a successive confirmation of high standard of education in Gdynia.

3rd place in Poland among general education secondary schools was taken by the Gdynia Bilingual High School no 3. Moreover, the School achieved the best result in the Pomeranian region for the 15th time already. Together with 4 other secondary schools from Gdynia it filled up half of our region's TOP 10.

When it comes to the technical colleges contest, Gdynia Hotel Management College took the 1st place in our region, not for the first time in history. The College of Refrigerating and Electronics Engineering was third on the chart.

AIM HIGH! GET AN AVIATION JOB IN GDYNIA



A fire fighter, a police officer, or a pilot possibly – these are the most desirable jobs for young boys. Aviation and avionic technicians are, sadly, not at the top of that list. Still, these are truly prospective professions, especially in view of the expected civil airport in Gdynia.

Courtesy of Gdynia-Kosakowo Airport

By February 2013, the Postsecondary School no. 1 in Gdynia will have made it possible to get aviation-related qualifications in our city. School graduates will be capable of performing line and hangar maintenance services,

technical assessment and aircraft equipment repairs. The proposed jobs shall be especially attractive here in Gdynia, considering the new Gdynia-Kosakowo airport, which is going to be opened this year.

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION INVITES STUDENTS FROM THE EAST

The Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski School of Business and Administration (WSAiB) in Gdynia invites students from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The school has launched a Russian version of its website dedicated to potential newcomers: www.wsaib.pl/ru

Candidates are offered help necessary to deal with the formalities they face upon their arrival. Also, they can take part in intensive Polish language courses, enabling them to communicate freely.

Nevertheless, all Russian-speaking students are entitled to be attended in their native language. They can talk to their coordinator about any kind of problem – whether it comes to their studies, accommodation, insurance, city tips or the Polish realities.

WSAiB offers 33 academic majors, including: company management, psychology in business, marketing, law and administration.

Within the frames of foreign exchange programmes, WSAiB has already hosted students from Turkey, Portugal, Spain, Romania, Germany, Norway and other European countries. Apart from the studies, they are offered various internships in international corporations, which function in Gdynia, such as Sony or Reuters.

GDYNIA – A FACTORY OF MILLIONAIRES AND A CITY OF THE LONG-LIVED

Gdynia is a city of lucky men and cheerful optimists

Recently, the city has gained yet another nickname – a factory of millionaires. And it is not without a reason – **5 LOTTO winnings over 1 mln PLN went to Gdynia residents in 2012.**

Altogether, players from our City have gathered as much as 64,9 mln PLN for their lucky numbers in a mere twelve months. The last winnings announced on the New Year's Eve were worth 9,1 mln PLN.

At the same time, Gdynia favours long-lived people. And here comes the proof – currently there are 97 residents who are 99 or more! The oldest Gdynia inhabitant has just turned 106.



Courtesy of Centrum Aktywności Seniora

ALMOST 800 COUPLES SAID 'YES!' IN 2012

782 couples entered into marriage in the Register Office in Gdynia in 2012



Photo by Krzysztof Romański

Following the well-known Polish superstition, most popular months are those containing 'r' in the name. A marriage contracted in one of these is supposed to be lasting and harmonious for years.

According to others, the best period to get married is Christmas time. And it was indeed a busy time in Gdynia – 56 couples entered into marriage then.

As many as 36 marriages of 2012 (almost 5%) were contracted between Poles and foreigners. Most of them were of British (5) or Turkish (3) nationality. The citizens of Italy, China, Argentina, Portugal, Ireland, Nigeria and Iran also appeared in the Register Office, and once a clerk was asked to solemnize a marriage between two foreigners – a Finnish man and a Russian woman. The percentage of mixed marriages in Gdynia has maintained a rather constant level for years. What changes are the countries of origin of the Gdynia residents' beloved. In the past, the majority consisted of our closest neighbours: Germans, Ukrainians, Swedes. Today, the spectrum of nationalities is much wider, with a slight prevalence of British people.

We wish all the couples happy married life!

GDYNIA RANKED 4TH IN POLAND IN THE BEST CITY ILLUMINATIONS CONTEST



Gdynia ranked fourth in the nationwide plebiscite for the best Christmas illumination called 'Shine with ENERGA'. Our city, as a winner of a regional selection, represented Pomorskie Region in the finals.

Photo by Tomasz Mordarski

The title of the most beautifully illuminated city in Poland was granted to Bielsko-Biala.

Christmas lights in Gdynia were spread across 10th Lutego Street, Starowiejska Street, as well as the most elegant in the city – Świętojańska Street. A special illumination appeared also at the Kosciuszki Square.

Nearby lanterns were covered with specially designed glamorous outfits, while luminous LED tapes were coiled around trunks and branches of neighbouring trees, creating a charming winter atmosphere. For the first time this year the Kaszubski Square got its own illumination. It was covered by the canopy of white lights and blue stars.

GREAT ORCHESTRA OF CHRISTMAS CHARITY

Dozens of events, hundreds of goods sold during auctions and thousands of red-heart stickers – symbols of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity – appeared in Gdynia on January 13th.

For the 21st time our city joined the amazing nationwide fundraising event in order to buy medical equipment for public hospitals, and celebrated the Orchestra's Grand Finale.

The funds collected throughout Poland will be split this year. Half of them will support neonatology and half – geriatric wards in Polish hospitals.

Thanks to the auction and the on-street fundraising we have managed to collect nearly 500 000 PLN. During the auction led by the Mayor of Gdynia in the Municipal Theatre 21 250 PLN was raised. The biggest sum, that is 1100 PLN, was offered for a cake prepared by a renown local chocolatier – Tomasz Deker. Another 1000 PLN was offered for the sport outfit of Tomasz Majewski, a Polish shot putter and a double Olympic gold medalist.

MUSIC ALL AROUND! - A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE 2012 GIGS IN GDYNIA

The past year has left us all with plenty of wonderful musical memories. Virtually each week we had a chance to participate in an interesting concert - either outdoor one, for tens of thousands of fans, in the arena, for several thousands or in a club – for a rather limited audience. Below you'll find our Gdynia TOP 12 concerts of 2012.



Photo by Dawid Linkowski / HSW Gdynia

TOP 12 Concerts – Gdynia 2012:

1. **Seal**, Gdynia Sports Arena, 20th November 2012
2. **Tricky**, The City Beach, Cudawianki Festival, 30th June 2012
3. **Penderecki/Greenwood**, Heineken Open'er Festival, 5th July 2012
4. **The XX**, Heineken Open'er Festival, 7th July 2012
5. **Tito & Tarantula**, Soundrive Festival, Kolibki Adventure Park, 14th July 2012
6. **Diana Krall**, Gdynia Sports Arena, 15th November 2012
7. **Buena Vista Social Club**, Gdynia Sports Arena, 14th November 2012
8. **Public Enemy**, Heineken Open'er Festival, 6th July 2012
9. **Patricia Barber**, Ladies' Jazz Festival, Musical Theatre, 21st July 2012
10. **Anathema**, Ucho Club, 4th October 2012
11. **Maleńczuk & Psychodancing**, Poklad Club, 15th November 2012
12. **Blindnote**, Globalitica World Cultures Festival, 26th July 2012

THE BIGGEST POLAND'S TRIATHLON EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE IN GDYNIA

Polish well-known actors: Borys Szyc, Maciej Stuhr, Piotr Gąsowski and Robert Rozmus became the ambassadors of Herbalife Triathlon Gdynia 2013 – the biggest triathlon event in Poland.

Herbalife Triathlon Gdynia 2013 will take place on August 9-11. The high point of the three-days sport struggle will be a long-distance contest (1,9 km swim, 90 km bike, 21,1 km run). Within the frames of the event there will also be a chance to participate in aquathlon, or to visit a triathlon fair with the whole family.

Half a year before the event there are already 1200 registered participants from 8 different countries.

The organizers' aim is to join the prestigious group of the biggest triathlon events in the world, grouped in the Ironman 70.3 Series by 2015 at the latest.