**ITM trade fair is not slowing down**

**The start-up zone and special programs for the SME sector are just some of the innovations that can be expected in the upcoming edition of ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE. The fair will also feature a number of proven items on the agenda. So far, there have been no signs of a crisis in the industry announced in the media and the slowdown is not visible in the ITM trade fair either.**

Although analysts have been announcing the upcoming disaster, it turns out that the latest GUS statistics provide a clearer picture of the situation of Polish industry. According to the Central Statistical Office (GUS), production in October 2019 increased by 3.5 per cent year on year, and by as much as 7.8 per cent compared to the previous month. These data are much better than the forecasts.

“We carefully follow all news and statistics concerning the industrial sector, but following our experience we try to be cautious about them. We talk to our exhibitors, both major players and smaller companies. They are not yet feeling this media-driven slowdown in industry. That is why we are optimistic about the future and we are not slowing down! The number of applications to the trade fair also proves our point of view. It is going to be a record-breaking edition,” convinces Anna Lemańska.

Apart from a wide range of items prepared by companies from Poland and abroad, the strength of the ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE trade fair lies in its extensive range of events. In cooperation with its partners and exhibitors, the MTP Group is not only working on proven events expected by professionals, but also on new initiatives.

“This will be a real dose of knowledge! We are preparing a lot of new features that fit the needs of the market. Certainly, micro and medium-size enterprises cannot miss the next edition of the ITM. We intend to hold dedicated meetings for them, which will be a great source of knowledge about current trends in this sector,” says A. Lemańska.

**One in ten SME companies operates in the industry**

There is a significant difference between the industry structure of large companies operating in Poland and that of the SME sector. More than a half (51.9%) of large entities conduct industrial activity. However, the Polish enterprise sector is dominated by micro enterprises, whose share in the total number of companies is 96.5%. Over the last few years there has been an increase in the number of micro enterprises. There are currently over 2 million of them. There are over 15 thousand medium-size enterprises in Poland, which constitutes only 0.7% of the Polish enterprise sector. As many as one in ten enterprises from the SME sector (10.1%) operates in the industry, according to the report prepared by PARP.

In order to meet the market needs, the ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE team are developing a broad range of events for small and medium-size companies. In particular, they will focus on the possibilities of innovation in the field of technology and digitization. In terms of the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), Poland is only ranked 24th amongst the group of 28 EU50 Member States. The advantage of using modern technologies is that they improve work efficiency and save time through faster exchange of information stored in the cloud. Digital solutions are also helpful in building relations with customers, they make it possible to obtain feedback on the quality of service or shopping preferences. Unfortunately, statistics show that not all Polish enterprises see the potential of this communication channel yet. There is still a large disproportion in the diffusion of ICT solutions in the economy. The greatest potential lies in small and medium enterprises, which are at risk of digital exclusion as they do not have the possibility to employ qualified employees and implement modern technologies.

Such solutions, which are possible to implement in small and medium enterprises and at the same time allow to improve many processes, will be the key element on the agenda addressed to managers of SME companies.

**Industrial START-UP ZONE**

A new feature of the ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE 2020 fair will be a zone for start-ups in the industry.

“Polish companies are still entering new markets, still have the advantage of a cheaper labor force while maintaining good quality of products or services they offer. However, that will end one day and then Polish companies will be forced to look for their advantage in technology. The industry is always looking for the best possible efficiency and it is impossible to achieve that without investing in automation and the latest digital solutions. Industrial companies are therefore a very good target market for innovative start-ups and, above all, one that recognizes that it takes a lot of investment to win at a later stage. We plan to show such start-ups at ITM,” emphasizes A. Lemańska.

The START-UP ZONE will feature solutions that help to automate and improve the production cycle, logistics, resource management and quality control. You can also count on start-ups, which are based on data aggregation and analytics, thus enabling enterprises to be *smart*.

“All initiatives related to this idea help manufacturing companies compensate for the increase of labor costs. This is important for maintaining the competitiveness of Polish players on global markets,” adds A. Lemańska.

**Thermal Spraying Academy**

This will be the third time that the ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE trade fair has been complemented by the Thermal Spraying Academy. As usual, the event will be accompanied by interesting factual presentations.

Thermal spraying is a useful process of applying relatively inexpensive coatings containing usually a high level of oxides and porosity. Thermal sprayed coatings have many advantages as they protect against corrosion, improve resistance to wear, show resistance to heat as well as influence resistance and electrical conductivity.

One of the presentations at the Thermal Spraying Academy, which is planned for the third day of the fair (4 June), will focus on the introduction and discussion of the program of establishing an association bringing together institutions dealing with thermal spraying in Poland. Both the functioning and benefits for the members of the association will be discussed.

The Academy makes it possible to present the possibilities, achievements and profiles of companies and institutions in the field of thermal spraying. The materials presented as scientific publications will be printed in the Welding Technology Review. The meeting is organized by the Welding Laboratory at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Management of the Poznań University of Technology.

The ITM INDUSTRY EUROPE trade fair will be held from 2 to 5 June 2020 at the Poznań International Fair. At the same time, there will also be a possibility to visit such exhibitions as Modernlog Trade Fair of Logistics, Transport and Storage, 3D Solutions - 3D Print and Scanning Fair, Subcontracting and Focast Foundry Forum.

Source: <https://www.parp.gov.pl>

Find out more at: [www.itm-europe.pl](http://www.itm-europe.pl)