

Many cities notice an opportunity in development of business tourism (or meetings industry). The infrastructure investments (like building of the ICE Kraków or The International Conference Centre in Katowice) confirm this fact. But success in this industry depends mostly on the activity of convention bureau, which is an entity responsible for promotion of the city, region or country as an excellent, national or international business tourism destination (UNWTO 2010). In spite of this, until the present day there was no investigation referring to the impact of convention bureau on local meetings industry's and city competitiveness. Therefore the following research project is proposed to answer a question: what is the impact of convention bureau activities on city competitiveness? And the aim of research is to examine the scope and strength of convention bureaux' impact on the polish cities competitiveness.

The deliberations will be based on economy, especially on: the resource-based theory of competitiveness and the neoinstitutionalism, and linking these two approaches is not common. The first one explains achieving an advantage in competition through resources, which company or city has (Stankiewicz 2005). The neoinstitutionalism emphasises the importance of institutions for economy, and an institution could be understood as an organization on the one hand, or as a set of rules on the other hand (Romanow 1997). The fundamental function of institutions is reduction of transaction costs, like costs of: search for information, negotiations, execution of contract and any other costs associated with making a transaction (Iwanek & Wilkin 1998). According to these two theoretical approaches, it is assumed, that convention bureau influences city competitiveness as an institution, which reduces the transaction costs in the meetings industry.

The research will be conducted in years: 2015-2017 and it will include 10 convention bureaux, which operate in polish cities (Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kielce, Kraków, Łódź, Poznań, Toruń, Warszawa and Wrocław). Foreign case studies will be used for comparison. The basis of the project will be information from interviews with representatives (managers or directors) of polish convention bureaux. To get a completed point of view the statistical data will be applied to describe a potential of polish meetings industry and opinions of convention bureaux' representatives will be compared with the assessments of entrepreneurs and employees in local government's units.

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