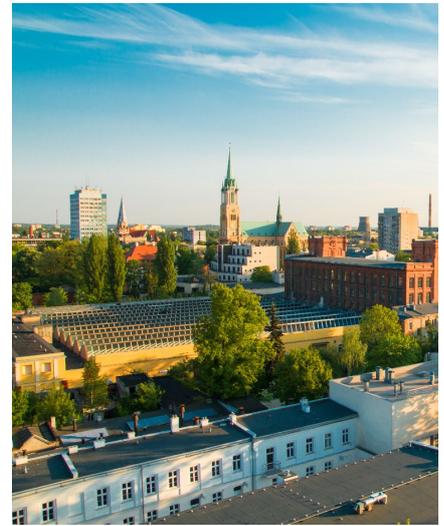


Lodzkie, a region specialized in ICT

ICT is one of the specialisation areas of the region of Lodzkie. Yet, even if there are good ICT systems and applications (possibly provided by businesses) in the region, there is no guarantee that people will also use them. In order to transform Lodz into a digital launch pad, public authorities need to raise the interest and build digital skills for future users. Based on a thorough analysis of the macro- and microeconomic data, interviews and meetings with representatives of the regional community, a series of areas of smart specialization have recently been identified in the Lodzkie region. They are the pillars of the new strategy for innovation and growth of the region of Lodzkie.

The regional innovation strategy for the Lodzkie region (LORIS 2030) seeks to make a better use of the existing potential of the region and build new forms of competitive advantage by investing in education, R&D and new infrastructures. As regards with the ICT specialization of the region, the strategy focuses on three key elements:

1. Promoting and developing training programmes related to ICT and e-skills
2. Publicly supporting open data applications (for health and transport)
3. Creating an ecosystem for supporting the development of ICT and entrepreneurship.



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Key initiatives

The Lodzkie region has become pretty much a digital area. Regional and city leaders are increasingly paying attention to tech companies and are seeking to create a favorable environment where both big and smaller tech companies can grow and flourish.

The Łódź Special Economic Zone

In Poland, special economic zones are created in order to attract investments and investors to the country. Their objective is to act as a catalyst for the economic development of cities or regions.

A special economic zone (SPZ) is defined as “a separate, uninhabited part of the country’s territory where business activity may be conducted under preferential conditions defined in the Act on Special Economic Zones of 20 October 1994”.

A corporate tax income exemption is often offered to investors in order to attract them in a location. Investors can also benefit from a real estate tax exemption if they run their business in a SPZ.

Today, the Lodz Special Economic Zone occupies an area of 1302 hectares. It hosts 50% SMEs and large firms such as zone Fujitsu, Infosys, Dell, Gillette, P&G, ABB, Indesit, Whirlpool and Kellogg's.

Investing in new infrastructure

In recent years, efforts have been made to create new entrepreneurial support infrastructures in the Lodzkie region. The area now hosts a **Technoport**, a science institution established through public funding which counts more than hundreds of employees.

Since 2012, there is also the **ICT Central Poland Cluster** which acts as a mean to raise awareness of the educational and career opportunities offered by the ICT industry in the region of Lodz. Through the creation of the cluster, Lodz University of Technology also aims to accelerate the uptake of ICT as an enabling technology for various sectors of the economy of the region. The cluster helps companies – that are members of the cluster – solving their problems, developing their organizational structure, strengthening their corporate strategy and promoting their image.

Hiring digital talents in the public sector to reinforce the digital focus

In order to improve the quality of the services it offers, the **Investment Agency of Lodz** changed their HR policies. They have now hired open-minded IT experts in order to create a new spirit in the team and organization. These experts are especially welcomed when complex, technical solutions are to be implemented.

Training digital talents to meet the demand of local businesses

In comparison with other regions in Poland, the Lodzkie region has gathered many ICT talents. The numerous tech companies established in the area offer many opportunities of employment. As a consequence, many young people are now deserting social science classes, which were before the number one favorite, to follow ICT programs instead.

Lodz University of Technology

Known far beyond Poland’s borders for its achievements in research, science, education and international cooperation, TUL is a dynamic and continually evolving university with a strong tradition in engineering.

Established in 1945, it is now home to 1,446 academic staff and over 20,000 students, of which 40% are female.