

New Technologies District

Katowice Gaming
and Technology Hub



Visualisations:

AMC – Andrzej M. Chołdzyński Sp. z o.o.

Table of contents

Nikiszowiec – the history like from a film
page 3

Tradition meets modernity
page 4

A long way from the underground to the surface
page 5-6

The 'Spodek' 'took off' again! Katowice is an e-sport mecca
page 7

Gaming and an increase in the region's intellectual potential and science-business cooperation
page 8-9

The condition of gaming sector in Poland and worldwide
page 10-11

Preparations for the Hub construction are running at full steam
page 12

Superetap – actions
page 13

The Katowice Gaming and Technology Hub – for a change
page 14-15

Nikiszowiec – the history like from a film

We owe the exceptional character of Nikiszowiec to cousins – Emil and Georg Zillmann – who were given a task to design a worker housing estate for employees of the Giesche mine. The buildings were to combine housing, administrative, and recreational functions, causing that miners and their families would live comfortably. In response to the order, architects from Charlottenburg suggested nine three-storey houses built on a quadrilateral plan. Courtyards were designed inside each of them – the meeting place, space for bread baking and animals growing. According to Zillmanns, a square, at which a huge St. Anna church, shops, a laundry, a drying room, and a bath house were placed, was to be the central point of the district.

The development was supplemented by a school, service centres, and a tavern with an entertainment hall.

The worker housing estate was built in the years 1908-1927. Consistent architecture, featuring a clear town planning character, designed by Zillmanns, remains in an unchanged form to this day. This place is included in the Industrial Monuments Route, and in 2011 it was recognised as a Historic Monument. In the same year the readers of the 'National Geographic Traveller' selected the 'Nikisz' as one of 7 New Wonders of Poland. Mr Kazimierz Kutz was shooting scenes of one of his most famous films – 'Sól ziemi czarnej' – here, among brick houses for workers' families.

Today Nikiszowiec is one of Katowice show-pieces and a 'must see' point for tourists visiting the voivodeship capital. Numerous guests, who for the first time enter the complex of Nikisz buildings, have an impression to be on a film set. Unique development stimulates imagination of even most experienced globetrotters, and the decorations on façades, arcade passageway, and aromatic coffee and delicious 'kołacz' (cake) in one of cafés here attract for walks the residents of neighbouring cities. Stone paved streets, red window sills, contrasting with white window shutters, and the brown brick make an impression that as if the time has stopped here. However, the time flies here very fast and we can witness Nikiszowiec changes for the better.



photo: Collections of the Museum of Katowice History

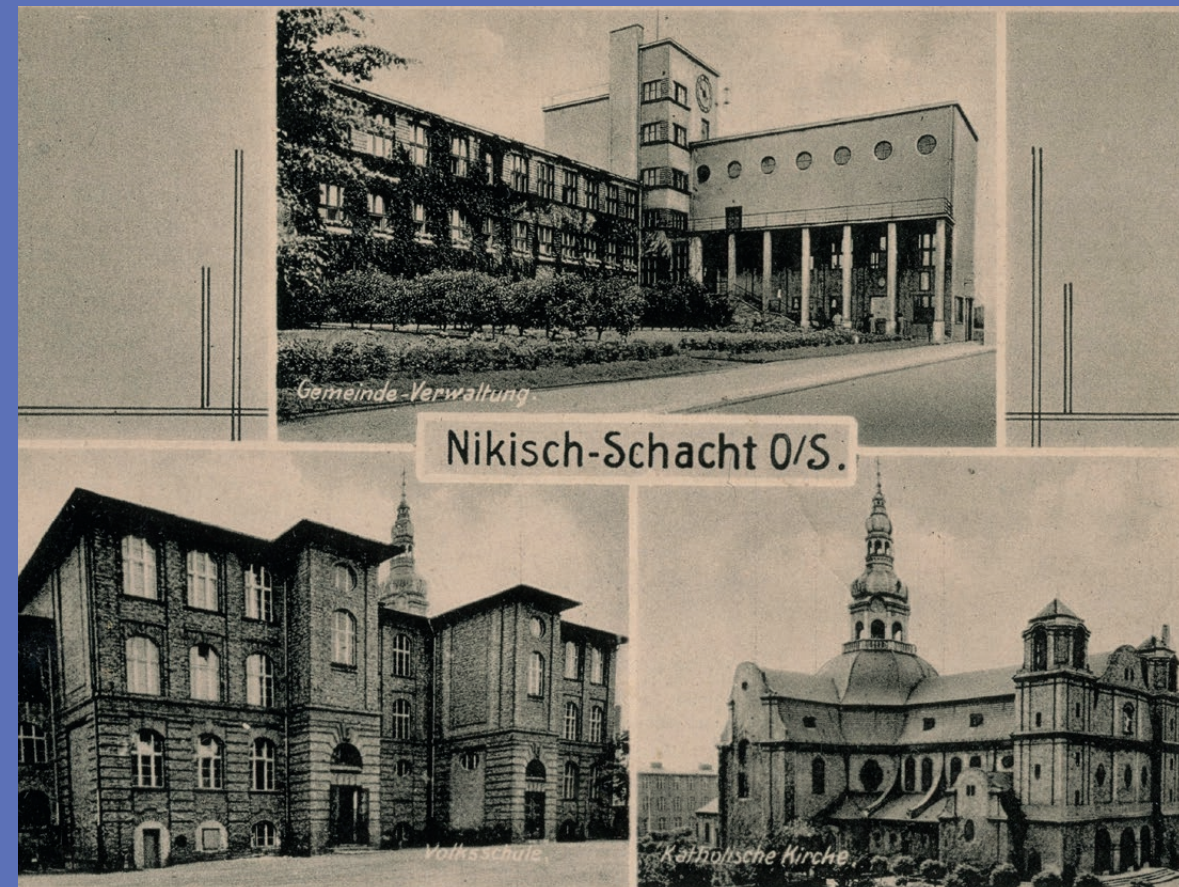


photo: Collections of the Museum of Katowice History



Tradition meets modernity



„... A walk through the Nikiszowiec streets is like a travel into the past”



photo: Katowice City Hall, Radosław Kaźmierczak, Nikiszowiec

In the past years the district experienced impressive revitalisation, due to which it is today a beautiful and safe place, resident-friendly and open to tourists. Efforts of the city authorities, supported by initiatives of local community activists, caused that the contemporary Nikiszowiec is a district, where more and more people want not only to spend a Sunday morning, but also to live.

A walk through the Nikiszowiec streets is like a travel into the past – to the time, when the district was dominated by the industry. Trying to imagine the life of local residents in the past century it is worth remembering, that this is an already closed chapter in the history of the region and of this place. Today's Nikisz is open to services and the creative industry. This is a space, where you

can eat well, find accommodation in a hotel or an apartment, enjoy massage, or go to a gallery. A branch of the Museum of Katowice History is situated here as well as the Wilson Shaft Gallery, adapted from a mining plant, closed in 1998, for the needs of the art. A unique industrial nature of the mining housing estate is favourable for events organisation. It is worth mentioning the most important ones, like the Night of Museums, Industriada, Art-Naif Festival, Parish Fair at Grandma Anna, and a Fair in Nikisz. The district is also not short of service and educational points, facilitating the daily life of its residents. People living and working here appreciate good transport links with the city centre, efficient connections with the main roads, and the neighbourhood of green areas. So it is no wonder, that the New

Nikiszowiec Housing Estate, which comprises 513 flats as well as service and commercial premises, was built close to the historical development. This, and a few other housing investment projects, confirms the unique nature of this part of Katowice and strengthens its transformation towards a place perfect for living and working. Hence in the city development plans Nikiszowiec was named the 'New Technologies District', in which the 'Katowice Gaming and Technological Hub' is to become its central point. It will originate on the site of former Wieszorek mine. This assumption well illustrates the direction of Katowice transformation – the city, where apart from hard coal, also the potential hidden in high technologies and programming languages is being 'mined'.

A long way from the underground to the surface

The prosperity in the steel and mining industry lasted till the last decade of the 20th century. Over time the output and production became less and less profitable and enterprises started to lay off employees. Numerous companies were closed. The entire Upper Silesia, which landscape was marked with hoisting shafts and chimneys, faced a great challenge. A change in the structure of economy forced the urban centres to redefine their identity. Katowice coped with this task very well, maintaining the position of the conurbation leader.

The city is today a vibrant economic centre, offering prospects of employment in new technologies, IT, financial, and service sectors. International corporations have their offices in Katowice, including such world giants as IBM, PwC, Fujitsu, Capgemini, Rockwell Automation, AT&T or Epam, who appreciate the potential of local labour market, perfect location of Katowice, and balanced costs of office and housing space rental.

„... International corporations have their offices in Katowice ...”



photo: Katowice City Hall, Kamil Kalkowski, The zone of Culture

The Katowice metamorphosis does not comprise only the economic area. Also the city tissue changes, which every year becomes more friendly to residents and their guests, event organisers, and investors. The city draws on its industrial heritage, setting a new growth path, based on services and the creative industry. The Zone of Culture, built on the site of a non-existing mine, is the key evidence. The Zone comprises:

- the new seat of the Silesian Museum with an underground exhibition;

- the concert hall of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, featuring perfect acoustics;

- the International Congress Centre – a conference space with the potential to serve big events.

If to the International Congress Centre we add the neighbouring 'Spodek' Entertainment-Sports Arena, then we will obtain a space, which can host global scale events. It is enough to say that Katowice gained recognition in the international arena and was chosen the host city for the COP24 Conference on Climate Change and the World

Urban Forum (WUF11). The Zone of Culture is a flag example of successful revitalisation of post-industrial areas. The rising modern office blocks and apartments in the city centre, recent reconstruction of the Market Square, or refurbishment of the PKP railway station and its combination with a shopping mall may show, how the city landscape changes. The Katowice Gaming and Technological Hub, which like the Zone of Culture originates on the site of a former hard coal mine, will be the next step towards creating an image of the 21st century city.



photo: Katowice City Hall, Kamil Kalkowski, The zone of Culture

„... The Zone of Culture, built on the site of a nonexistent mine ... ”

The 'Spodek' 'took off' again!

Events, during which the world video-game stars compete, skilfully arouse the interest in e-competitions. Such contests stir similar emotions as traditional sports, attracting attention of the media, sponsors, and primarily fans. The Intel® Extreme Masters (IEM) ranks as one of leaders in the e-sport world; this is a series of competitions for pro-gamers. The IEM enjoys a good reputation among players and fans incessantly from the first edition in 2006, which took place in Hannover. The prestigious cycle is considered a virtual league of masters in two games: CS:GO and StarCraft II. The games under the Intel® Extreme Masters series were played so far in more than 30 countries. The legendary 'Spodek' Entertainment-Sports Arena witnessed many important events in the history of Polish sport. Since 2013 it hosts also events, which participants, instead of a ball, tennis racket, or ice hockey stick, hold a computer mouse in their hands. What is worth emphasising, the attendance during the IEM is as impressive as during volleyball games. In 2019 the games were held on two arenas – the Spodek and the International Congress Centre. In 2023, during two IEM weekends, the combat of e-athletes was viewed live by 65 thousand fans. These statistics are an excellent litmus paper of the potential latent in the industry related to the video games production and the service of competitors and fans.



photo: Katowice City Hall, Sławomir Rybok, IEM Katowice

Katowice is an e-sport mecca

An excellent attendance in the auditorium, perfect infrastructure, and good cooperation with the city authorities are Katowice assets emphasised by the ESL FACEIT Group – the organiser of Intel® Extreme Masters cycle and of a few other similar tournaments, one of most important brands on the global market of video games. To confirm successful relationships with the voivodeship capital, the company has chosen Katowice as the seat of its main office in our country. The ESL Gaming representative office in Poland is involved inter alia in organising games, running a TV channel devoted to e-sports, and in internet marketing.

The growing interest in the presented issues is visible also in the world of education. Secondary schools and universities try to follow the trends, offering to pupils and students such specialisations, which will help them to find a job of their dreams. The educational offer in those fields develops also in the Upper Silesia. In Katowice itself the studies on designing elements of video games may be undertaken e.g. at the University of Silesia, the University of Economics, the Academy of Arts, and the Katowice Institute of Information Technologies. Their graduates can find jobs for example in numerous gaming companies situated in the Metropolis GZM.



photo: Katowice City Hall, Radosław Kaźmierczak, Spodek

Gaming and an increase in the region's intellectual potential and science-business cooperation

The sector of computer and video games, and also the e-sports sector, are now the fastest growing in strength branches of the entertainment sector, as well as belong to the most dynamically growing sectors in the entire global economy (cf. NewZoo, Statista, Deloitte, or Games Observatory reports). The domestic games sector, despite the observable economic slowdown, turns out to be resistant to economic fluctuations, maintains a high growth rate, and in the case of certain market segments gives pace to innovation processes, frequently moving the limits of technological possibilities, and creating a completely new potential of experience, experiments, and emotions, both in rivalry, sports, and arts.

Unquestionably a significant shortage of human resources, including a sizeable deficit in graduates of high-tech fields of studies, is one of crucial barriers for even faster development of high-tech and intensive knowledge sectors, which include gaming related sectors. The gap between the labour market absorption and supply in the gaming sector, growing year on year, is to an increasingly large extent covered from foreign sources via remote work. Therefore the Katowice Gaming and Technological Hub (KGTH) is to become not only an attractor for high-tech staff, contributing to successive regional development, but also a laboratory for the next generations or graduates, specialists, and experts

who in the future will provide systemic labour support not only for local, but also regional and global organisations.

The Katowice Gaming and Technology Hub is to be the second, modern, technologically advanced, and digitised image of historic Nikiszowiec. The location of an ultra-modern Hub in a historic district is not random. Nikiszowiec is situated almost in the very heart of the Upper-Silesian and Zagłębie Metropolis (GZM), which creates an opportunity of access to the intellectual potential of many thousands, both already professionally active as well as still developing at the Upper Silesian universities and secondary schools. On the one hand, the Upper Silesia is one of

pillars for the domestic computer games sector, and also the European e-sports mecca. On the other hand, this is the area with a high school attendance rate, with extensive academic, educational, and training facilities. What is important, if the non-random location of the Hub enables access to highly qualified labour and creates hundreds of attractive jobs, then at the same time it gives impetus for a dynamic growth and modernisation of the existing educational offer. Because from the very beginning an assumption is made that the KGTH is to be not only a strictly business and incubation alliance, but on the contrary, it is to be a living innovation ecosystem, based on cooperation of heterogeneous stakeholders, including

„... are now the fastest growing in strength branches of the entertainment sector ...”

enterprises, investors, freelancers, and also scientific and research institutions, educational centres, or local government units, and even players and their communities. Also a possibility of cooperating with the already existing cooperatives of local circles, such as the Academic Consortium Katowice - City of Science, the Innovations Centre Erasmus+ InnHUB Katowice, or the Silesian Festival of Science, is an unrepeatable opportunity for creation of something exceptional in this specific place on the earth, including the co-creation of innovations. The inclination and openness towards cooperation between local academic centres, scientific-research, and local government institutions, outstanding on

the country scale, give rise to efficient functioning of the gaming innovation ecosystem and to co-creation within its framework of radical, and perhaps disruptive, innovations being the driving force of stepwise growth of the gaming sector worldwide.



photo: Katowice City Hall, Kamil Kalkowski



Visualisation: AMC – Andrzej M. Chołdżyński Sp. z o.o.

The condition of gaming sector in Poland and worldwide

The gaming sector increases its importance every year, becoming a more and more important part of traditional sports, and an ever-attractive market. The popularity of the games sector is proven by a systematic increase in the number of customers, both among e-sports enthusiast as well as occasional observers. The number of players in 2020 was 435 million, in 2022 - 532 million, and for 2025 it is forecast as 640 million. The average growth rate (CAGR) for the gaming sector consumers is +8.1% per year. The growth, referred to as a prolonged effect of the corona virus pandemic, results from the incessant attraction of new users in the years 2021 and 2022, and from great popularity of new e-sports franchises, such as Valorant and Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. The popularity of mobile games and cloud games has been growing dramatically. A trend of subscription model appears in making the games available, following the Spotify or Netflix. In Poland, due to the ICT development, the access to a good quality Internet and computer hardware is improving, making the e-sports increasingly more available.

The gaming sector comprises both games and e-sports events, including the international Intel Extreme Masters tournament organised in Katowice. Every year the event attracts to the capital city of the Upper Silesia enthusiasts of the e-sports competition from all over the world, and Katowice becomes the global capital city of e-sports. The e-sports tournaments are transmitted via Internet (Twitch TV, Youtube, and Huya) and on TV. It is possible to watch them in popular TV stations and in channels dedicated to e-games (Polsat Games, E-sport TV, and GameToon). Also e-sports bets gain more and more fans.

The gaming sector development and its increasing popularity is followed by the growing importance for the market. The revenues and investors' interest are increasing year on year. The average growth rate (CAGR) for the revenues of the global games market is +3.4% per year. At the end of 2020 the global revenue of the sector amounted to USD 179.1 billion, in 2022 - USD 184.4 billion, and according to the forecast, in 2025 it will reach USD 211.2 billion.

The gaming sector is a young sector, with a global reach. The market of games, e-sports games and related events, Internet and TV transmissions, and e-sports bets has been dynamically growing. At the same time also games-related services have been developing, i.e. the rental of space dedicated to the sector, training facilities for e-sportsmen, coaching, personal training, and legal advice for the sector. The sector growth affects also sales of complementary goods, i.e. computer hardware, consoles, monitors, TV sets, headphones, gaming accessories, gaming furniture, and even clothing for players.

The gaming sector undoubtedly has great potential and optimistic forecasts for the future.

The data originate from the Newzoo.com website (access on the 1st of February 2023).



photo: Katowice City Hall, Sławomir Rybok, IEM Katowice

„... The number of players in 2020 was 435 million, in 2022 - 532 million, and for 2025 it is forecast as 640 million.”



photo: Katowice City Hall, Radosław Kaźmierczak, IEM Katowice

Preparations for the Hub construction are running at full steam

On the material side the project has been divided into three stages. The modernisation of existing post-mine buildings around the Pulaski Shaft is the first. It is to be the heart of the future Hub, where e.g. educational centres, technological laboratories, and approx. one thousand jobs will be situated in office spaces configured in diverse ways. At the beginning of 2022 there was an architectural competition for this task, and its winner was AMC – Andrzej M. Chołdzyński Sp. z o.o. The concluded contract resulted in detailed designing, and it is planned to obtain the building permit in spring 2023.

The construction of film and recording studios is stage two, which are also to be located near the Pulaski Shaft. In January 2023 an architectural competition was announced, which should be resolved in mid-year. It is planned to obtain the largest film studio in the country, which

may also be an arena for e-sports games for 2000 spectators.

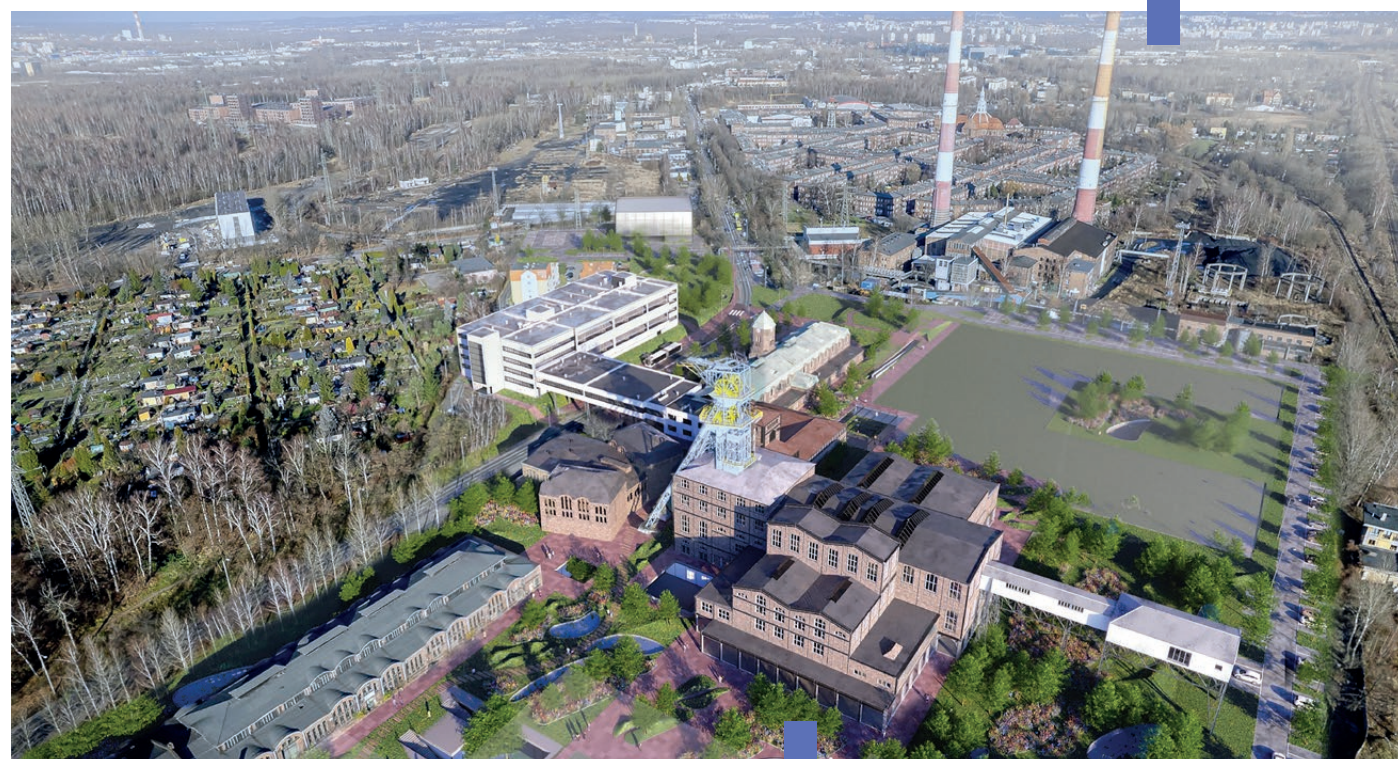
By the end of Q1 the area planned for the above stages will be handed over to the Katowice City by the Spółka Restrukturyzacji Kopalń.

Stage three comprises the management of post-mine facilities at the Poniatowski Shaft. The inventory taking of these facilities and assessment of their technical condition is ongoing, which will next allow to start the design work.

The Hub construction will be possible due to the EU support. The first two aforementioned stages together are a key project of the 2021 – 2027 European Funds for the Silesian Voivodeship. The application documentation is now under preparation, so as to be capable of filing an application for financing in

spring 2023. The obtaining of application approval is a condition to invite tenders for the construction works.

Irrespective of the design work, also the promotion of the Hub construction idea continues, as well as formulation of its offer. The first declarations of the willingness to rent the space in the future Hub are already being made. These actions are performed by the Project Implementing Unit situated in the Katowickie Inwestycje SA and by the Investor Service Department of the Katowice City Hall. The start of rental agreements conclusion is predicted for mid-2025, and the Hub commissioning for mid-2026.



Nikiszowiec – the new technologies district – stage one of the KGTH
Visualisation: AMC – Andrzej M. Chołdzyński Sp. z o.o.

Superetap – actions



The heart of future Hub
Visualisation: AMC – Andrzej M. Chołdzyński Sp. z o.o.

So-called Supertap is an important element of brand building of the Gaming and Technological Hub. It can be defined as soft actions, which accompany the infrastructural transformation of the site of former KWK 'Wieczorek'. This action integrates such activities as consultations with the gaming and e-sports sector to define the needs, which will be satisfied by services proposed to the Hub space and infrastructure tenants, or developing relationships within the local and global ecosystem of the games sector. The cooperation with universities is an equally important action, so that well prepared staff could be provided for stakeholders at the moment of the Gaming and Technological Hub opening,

but also the knowledge of methodology for research and development in the sector, or the educational offer could be prepared based on the educational and conference spaces, which will originate in the Hub.

In 2022 the visualisation of the Hub design was presented during one of most important events for the gaming sector worldwide, i.e. Gamescom fair in Cologne. The insight into the expectations of the Polish games sector was also allowed by the study visits to the Digital Dragons Accelerator and Incubator, or during the Poznań Game Arena. In addition, the first 'Gaming Katowice' conference was held on the 6th of December.

The actions started in 2022 will be definitely continued in the entire process of Hub offer building and creation of the catalogue of services for residents. The project is not only about designing a friendly, functional, and well equipped spaces, but about working on relationships with stakeholders, who will supply the Katowice Gaming and Technological Hub in such a way as to create a venue, where the business and science will be merging.

The Katowice Gaming and Technology Hub – for a change

For years we have been consistently counting on innovation and modern business services. It is the capital of the Metropolis GZM that became the place, where we more and more often discuss about prospects for businesses of the future. The city, which in the past was associated with the heavy industry, now is famous inter alia for the e-sport. In 2013 we hosted for the first time the Intel Extreme Masters - the event, which became a milestone in the development of Katowice. Because, among others, of this event many companies, that count

in the world, have drawn attention to the capital of the Silesian Voivodeship, as a potential venue to locate offices of their enterprises. Especially companies from broadly understood IT and modern business services sector count on us. The growing interest of global investors in Katowice was an impulse, due to which the New Technologies District, including the Katowice Gaming and Technology Hub originate in our city. For many residents the areas of former Wieczorek mine, the Poniatowski Shaft, and the Pulaski Shaft are an extraordinary

symbol of hard working and reliability, which now will gain new functions and life. I am convinced that the transformation of those places into a space for the innovative technologies sector will allow us to shift into sixth gear and will become an important point on the axis of transformation, which Katowice experience.

„... the Intel Extreme Masters – the event, which became a milestone in the development of Katowice.”



Marcin Krupa
Mayor of Katowice



photo: Katowice City Hall, Kamil Kalkowski,
Panorama of Katowice



Authors of texts:

Patrycja Klimas, D.Sc. – Prof. at the Wrocław University of Economics and Business

Wojciech Maroszek – Deputy Director for HUB, Katowickie Inwestycje S.A.

Magdalena Cyganek, Ph.D.Eng. – Chief Specialist, Investor Service Department, Katowice City Hall

Barbara Miś – Head of Section, Investor Service Department, Katowice City Hall

Łukasz Żółciak – Chief Specialist, Investor Service Department, Smart City Officer, Katowice City Hall

Authors of photographs:

Katowice City Hall Archive, Radosław Kaźmierczak, Sławomir Rybok, Kamil Kalkowski, COMTV, Museum of Katowice History.

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KATOWICE
for a change