



## **Irish Ambassador visited Krakow**

2016-07-26

**Intensification of Polish-Irish business cooperation as well as celebration of St. Patrick's Day next year were main topics of the meeting of HE Mr Gerard Keown, Ambassador of Ireland to Poland and Mayor of Krakow Jacek Majchrowski on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**

Although Ambassador Keown has visited Krakow several times already (first time as a student in 1990) it was his first official visit in our city since the beginning of his diplomatic mission in Poland. Next day, the Irish Ambassador took part in the conference exploring business opportunities and strategies in Poland and Central Europe region organized in Krakow by the Irish Chamber of Commerce that had just recently been renamed to Irish-Polish Chamber of Commerce to underline the bilateral nature of business contacts and cooperation between Ireland and Poland.

Strengthening of the traditionally good business cooperation between our countries is one of main priorities for Ambassador Keown. During the meeting with Mayor of Krakow His Excellency underlined the fact that Krakow and Małopolska region have great potential and its geopolitical and cross-border cooperation make this region a strategic one from the perspective of Irish economic interests and therefore this potential should be explored. Ambassador Keown congratulated the Mayor on dynamic changes and rapid development of our city in the recent years, referring to numerous infrastructural investments. Mr Majchrowski underlined the role of European funds in the transformation period.

Another topic discussed at the meeting was Ambassador Keown's request for the possibility of illuminating in green a landmark in Krakow on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016. This would be Krakow's input into the global action to mark St. Patrick's Day which is celebrated through making the world's famous landmarks turn green. Mayor Majchrowski declared that both the highly popular cycling-pedestrian crossing, Father Bernatek bridge and the newly opened flyover linking Lipska and Wielicka streets (the longest such flyover in Poland) will be illuminated in green on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016 as symbols of intercultural but also interpersonal Krakow-Irish communication and relationship.

Krakow is becoming a very attractive location for Irish business and investment. Also our cultural and educational ties are strong. Although, at the moment, there are no there are no official contacts between our city and Dublin at the moment in the years 2009-2012 they were linked with partnership agreement. Krakow and the Capital of Ireland are both UNESCO Cities of Literature, Jagiellonian University and the Ireland's oldest University, Trinity College Dublin, have a cooperation programme.

Ambassador Keown underlined that Poland and Ireland are firm partners within the European Union. Two-way trade is growing 15%-20% a year and was worth € 2.2 billion in 2014. Polish community in Ireland estimates at approx.150,000. Irish Government sponsored a week long Polska-Éire festival, organized earlier this year, to celebrate the positive contribution of Polish people made to Irish life. There are 55 flights weekly between Polish and Irish airports including 9 flights a week connecting Dublin and Krakow.

**[Irish-Polish Chamber of Commerce](#)**



**Magiczny  
Kraków**

**Photos: [OTO FOTOkronika Miasta Krakowa](#)**