

PrezSez: Trip Report for Krakow – IPMA 2007 Congress by Lew Ireland

The IPMA 2007 Congress in Krakow, Poland, was an opportunity to meet project managers, project consultants, and project management trainers from around the world. The Congress included social events for relaxing and informal gatherings of people to exchange information about themselves and their respective country. It was personally and professionally rewarding in a beautiful 750-year-old city and a country that has given the world such notables as Frederic Chopin. Wikipedia lists nearly 1000 Polish notables in the arts and sciences.

The highlight of the Congress was unquestionably the Keynote Speaker – Lech Walesa, winner of the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize, former President of the Republic of Poland (1990-1995), and labor organizer in the Gdansk, Poland, Shipyards (1987-1990). His work in the shipyards under a brutal Communist rule was not without hardship.



Lech Walesa speaking to the IPMA 2007 Congress, June 18, 2007 – Photo by Jouko Vaskimo

Speaking in Polish with simultaneous translation to English, Mr. Walesa talked about the future of Poland without bitterness or regret of past events. He mentioned how the Germans came through Poland (in 1939) and liked it so much that they stayed (until 1945). Then the Russians came through Poland (in 1945) and they stayed (until 1990). The audience enjoyed Mr. Walesa's bit of humor about "visitors" to Poland.

This was a highly successful Congress as the result of many dedicated volunteers working for the participants. Five Americans attended the Congress – two giving professional papers. The total number of participants is estimated to be about 1500.

Presentations were well done and interesting with several internationally recognized persons such as Peter Morris (UK), Rodney Turner (UK), Klaus Pannenbacher (Germany), Miles Shepherd (UK), Roland Garies (Austria), Lynn Crawford (Australia), Sergey Bushuyev (Ukraine), Rebecca Winston (USA), and Larry Suda (USA). Adesh Jain hosted the Nation-to-Nation Forum on Saturday preceding the Congress.

The Congress Project Team did an excellent job of planning and executing the Congress. Every one of the team members was most helpful, making the professional and social sides of the Congress enjoyable. Organized social events included a gala dinner, a tour of Krakow, and music in a garden.

The next IPMA World Congress is in November 2008 in Rome, Italy. Someone mentioned that the keynote speaker would have to be the Pope to improve over Mr. Walesa. We will see what the 2008 Congress does to follow the success of the Krakow Congress. Interested individuals should start their planning early – especially if they would like to present a paper to the 2008 Congress. See www.ipmaroma2008.it