

Poland: Emerging Innovation Leader of the Visegrad Group

Poland is the only country in Europe which has achieved over 20% GDP growth since 2008. This resistance to the economic downturn may be surprising especially taking into consideration low competitiveness of the economy demonstrated, for example, by innovation rankings.

An explanation for Poland's recent success may be linked to the relentless reforms. Transformation and integration with the European Union required innovation in all aspects of economy and society. The region's entrepreneurial economy transformed itself by innovating in business, public administration and society-at-large. While the innovation system remains fragmented and requires further investment and institutional changes, statistical data shows the growing number of clusters, patents filed, both graduates and jobs in science and technology, born-global innovative companies, and an increasing private and public R&D expenditure.

However, the innovation gap remains difficult to bridge and is most evident in the small business sector which faces problems with access to finance and to entrepreneurial 'know-how'. The next stage of development for Poland needs to focus on further increasing investment in R&D in a strategic way, building new types of academia-industry partnerships, providing capital to high-growth companies, and integrating innovation ecosystems within countries and with most innovative economies of Europe.