

# KIDS TIME FAIR 2016

A LOOK INSIDE CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE'S LARGEST TOY FAIR HELD IN KIELCE, POLAND

by **REYNE RICE**, *trend hunter and toy industry analyst*

**THE LARGEST TRADE SHOW FOR TOYS,** games, and children's products in Central and Eastern Europe, Kids Time 2016 was held in Kielce, Poland in late February. This seventh annual international fair featured toys and products for children and recorded double digit growth in key measurements, including more than 150,690 square feet of exhibitor space, more than 5,500 professional trade visitors, and more than 400 exhibitors. Due to overwhelming exhibitor growth and interested buyers, event organizers added two exhibit halls, for a total of seven exhibit halls. The Targi Kielce Exhibition Center, home of Kids Time, is the second largest exhibition center in this part of Europe, and this state-of-the-art exhibition and congress center hosts nearly 70 events per year.

For the first time, the Kids Time Star Awards were presented at the trade show. Six winners were selected from a pool of more than 240 competition entrants across various categories, including toys, textiles, and juvenile products.

The Kids Time trade show offers a unique

showcase platform for international manufacturers of toys, games, strollers, car seats, and other children's products, including brands such as ABC Design, Baby Jogger, Britax, Bugaboo, Chicco, Cloud B, Disney Interactive, GoldieBlox, Graco, Hasbro, Jakks Pacific, K's Kids, Miniland, Playmobil, Scandinavian Baby, SkipWish, Spin Master, Tiny Love, and Yookidoo. Kielce Expo is also the premier exposition for all Polish-leading manufacturers, including Adamex, Aro, Avionaut, Baby Design, Deltim, Euro-Cart, Jedo, Lookart, Pilch, Tako, and Tutek.

A Central and Eastern European trade show is important to the U.S. market for two key reasons. First, export markets for U.S. brands can reach into Poland and also into Czech, Turkey, Romania, Hungary, the Baltic states, Greece, Russia, and more. Poland's annual birth rate alone is approximately 400,000, making it a great market for children's products. Second, Polish manufacturers produce high-quality and innovative products that cannot be found anywhere else. Some exhibitors still sell exclusively to

## A LOOK AT THE POLISH MARKET

According to NPD data in Poland, the Polish market increased 10 percent from Sept. 2014 to Sept. 2015. The fastest growing categories of products in Poland were games and puzzles (up 26 percent), plush (up 20 percent) and arts & crafts (up 19 percent). The two largest categories also increased year-over-year, with the No. 1 category, building sets/construction, up 14 percent, followed by the No. 2 category, infant and preschool, up 8 percent. The fourth quarter represents roughly 45 percent of sales in Poland.

the Polish market, but they are looking to expand their exports, and expansion into North American markets is a key goal.

Trade guests from more than 33 countries attended this expanding fair this year, including representation from the U.S. and Dubai. The number of exhibits has nearly doubled for three years in a row. There are also core established distributors, such as Marko and Dumel, who distribute products into Poland, and into other Central and Eastern European markets, expanding the depth and breadth of U.S. manufacturers into these regions.

Next year, Targi Kielce, organizer of Kids Time, will hold a newly formulated conference program designed to inform Polish and Central and Eastern European manufacturers how to break into the North American marketplace. This program will offer more visibility for Polish and Central and Eastern European manufacturers, and offer U.S. and Canadian retailers new products with distinct points of difference for their consumers. »



Reyne Rice is a trend hunter, toy industry analyst, consultant, and journalist with more than 30 years of experience in marketing, researching, and analyzing the toy industry, children's and family technology, and the youth market. She has owned her own consultancy, Toy Trends, since 2003 and can be reached at [reyne@reynerice.com](mailto:reyne@reynerice.com).

