

PRESS RELEASE

WOLF THEISS FORUM SEES POTENTIAL RECORD M&A DEALS IN POLAND

Warsaw, 3 October 2017 – M&A interest in Central and Eastern Europe remains strong even in the face of full valuations and may lead to a record number of deals this year, experts from international law firm Wolf Theiss predicted at the CEE M&A and Private Equity Forum which took place in Warsaw on September 26th and 27th. Leading funds are likely to remain interested in the region for several years, according to experts from the firm, which for the fourth straight year co-hosted Central Europe's biggest business gathering on M&A transactions and private equity funds.

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This year's Forum brought together more than 250 representatives of private equity funds, investment banks, tax and legal experts as well as other companies providing investment advisory services in Central Europe. The main panel discussions concerned fundraising strategies, joint investments and general economic prospects, as well as insights into the biggest M&A transactions. Debates on the rapid development of the fintech industry and shared services/outsourcing companies were of particular interest.

"As an engaged participant of the Forum in the past several years, I have noticed growing investor interest in the region," said **Ron Given**, Co-Managing Partner at the Wolf Theiss Warsaw office. "Poland and all of Central Europe are a very promising market, attracting bigger and bigger players. Valuations are full, but certainly 'dealable'."

Deal value in Poland shot up last year, bringing total M&A activity in 2016 to a five-year high at €11.2bn. Large-ticket deals were underpinned by a significant vote of confidence from private equity firms and by government efforts to win back large stakes in the financial services sector, according to a Wolf Theiss report. The biggest M&A transaction was the sale of e-commerce group Allegro for €3bn.

"We probably won't have another transaction as big as Allegro this year but we will likely see new records on other fronts. One of those records will probably be in the number of deals," said Given. "Although the romantic sectors remain the same, consumer industries, health care and technology, we see a real surge in interest in all things technology, playing off of the strong base of technical skills in our region. Eastern Europe produces more engineers annually than all of the United States. That is bound to have an impact."

The CEE M&A and Private Equity Forum 2017 was organized in partnership with Mergermarket.

"The main takeaways are the very rapid development of private equity funds and

the absolutely amazing growth of shared services companies in Poland in past years," said **Jacek Michalski**, Partner and Head of the Corporate and M&A Practice at Wolf Theiss in Warsaw.

"The Forum is a great place to sense market trends," added **Przemysław Kozdój**, Partner and Head of the Banking and Finance Practice at the Wolf Theiss Warsaw office. "The increasing role of private debt investors, greater variety of applied financing tools and increasing complexity of the financing aspects of transactions, such as Allegro, require knowledgeable advisors who are able to think out of the box."

For a video story on the Forum, please click on: <https://youtu.be/BKVf57xga3U>

For more information, please visit: <http://events.mergermarket.com/cee>

ABOUT WOLF THEISS

Wolf Theiss is one of the leading European law firms in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe with a focus on international business law. With 340 lawyers in 13 offices located in Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine, Wolf Theiss represents local and international industrial, trade and service companies, as well as banks and insurance companies. Combining law and business, Wolf Theiss develops comprehensive and constructive solutions on the basis of legal, fiscal and business know-how.

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