

Peak of the Tourist Season in Krakow - Summary

2024-10-30

During the summer holidays, between June and August, Krakow welcomed more than 4.5 million visitors, and with the high tourist season coming to an end, it is the perfect moment to summarise the city's activities in this regard.

Just over 330,000 of the above number of visitors were foreigners, with the rest consisting of domestic tourists, including over than 780,000 visitors from the Małopolska region. It is also worth mentioning that in recent months a new group of tourists started visiting Krakow – visitors from the Arabian Peninsula.

Although tourism brings significant economic benefits to the city, as well as promoting its heritage and image internationally, it also poses considerable challenges, with Krakow having to balance the needs of visitors with the comfort of its residents. The city's activities in this area include the information and promotion campaign *Respect Krakow* and the *City Helpers* initiative.

Discover and respect Krakow

The *Respect Krakow* campaign has been implemented since 2019 as part of Krakow's sustainable tourism policy, with the main aim being to create harmonious relationships between tourists, residents and businesses, based on respecting and understanding the needs of all the groups involved. The campaign presents Krakow as a friendly and open place, famous for its rich cultural offer, numerous traditions, and excellent cuisine. At the same time, visitors are encouraged to observe basic rules, such as respecting the night-time quiet hours, keeping the city clean, refraining from consuming alcohol in public, and acting in an environmentally friendly manner.

The information and promotion campaign *Respect Krakow* is being carried out on social media and travel portals for the second year in a row. Visitors from abroad are thus encouraged to visit Krakow, with the applicable rules communicated to them upon arrival. The campaign, which reached an online audience of nearly 10 million in 2024, was also implemented using promotional materials such as animations, graphics and leaflets visible in public spaces in the city, including on Krakow's advertising media: digital citylights at bus stops, Krakow City Card machines, and in buses and trams. In addition, a *Respect Krakow* animation, displayed in the baggage claim hall of Krakow Airport, welcomed visitors, at the same time encouraging them to observe the rules and social norms of Krakow.

4th edition of City Helpers

City Helpers are an integral part of the *Respect Krakow* programme every year. Their role is to spot and draw attention to inappropriate behaviour in the historic city centre, as well as provide information and promote local events and cultural institutions. During this year's edition, Helpers patrolled the historic centre of Krakow every day from 15 June to 31 August, from 1 pm to 9 pm, and at weekends, with residents in mind, until 1 am. In the case of more difficult interventions, they cooperated with the municipal police (218 calls) and the ambulance service (96 calls), and they were



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also trained to administer first aid and use defibrillators that were provided by the “Save a Life” foundation. Courtesy of the Public Transport Authority, the *City Helpers* also had two cargo bicycles at their disposal, which proved useful for storing information leaflets and brochures prepared for the programme. This year, they also helped to promote greener tourism, handing out reusable bottles, and thus encouraging others to use Krakow’s drinking fountains and to save water. During this year’s tourist season, *Helpers* provided information to more than 5,300 people, recorded 837 undesirable behaviours and 235 violations of cultural park rules, and administered first aid 108 times. It is worth noting that the *City Helpers* speak foreign languages fluently, especially English and Ukrainian. In order to additionally enhance the quality of service to foreign tourists, each patrol is also equipped with electronic translators from Vasco, which enable communication in almost 80 languages. This year’s edition of the campaign was carried out in cooperation with the Association of Tourist Organisations of the Royal Capital City of Krakow.

***City Helpers* and night-time economy**

It is worth recalling that the *City Helpers* performed tasks related to the night-time economy, which encompasses a variety of activities, from eating out to cultural events. The night-time economy is becoming an important part of the development strategy pursued by large tourist cities, including Krakow. Ensuring safety, public order, and a diverse range of services for residents is a priority for the city authorities. This year, for the first time, the *City Helpers* participated in field observations conducted for the purposes of night-time economy, including monitoring noise levels at four city points during night-time hours with the use of professional sonometers. They also carried out surveys, monitored the number of people at specific points in the city, and reported findings of how the city functions at night. Cooperation with residents and local businesses is crucial to minimise the adverse effects of the increased night-time activity of city users, and the institution of the Night Mayor plays a special role in this respect. This new initiative in Krakow aims to balance the city’s night-time offer, built on compromise and respect for the needs of both residents and visitors, and the Night Mayor also acts as coordinator and chair of the Commission for the Sustainable Night-Time Economy, which was initiated in mid-August this year and comprises representatives from key institutions and the community, including business associations and residents. Its aim is to identify and address issues related to the night-time economy, and initiate the development of cultural, tourism and creative industry offers. To facilitate the Commission’s work, three working groups were set up to work on issues in the areas of public safety and order, infrastructure and logistics, and offers for residents and tourists. The Night Mayor worked with the *City Helpers* team to respond effectively to situations that require intervention, such as violations of night-time quiet hours or inappropriate behaviour in public spaces. With all stakeholders working together, Krakow is becoming even more hospitable and welcoming to residents and visitors.

What lies ahead?

Although Krakow faces challenges posed by the increasing number of visitors, it continues to take steps towards sustainable tourism development. Thanks to the involvement of residents, businesses, NGOs and the authorities, as well as initiatives such as *Respect Krakow* and *City Helpers*, the city is working out a reasonable compromise between visitors’ needs and residents’ comfort. Despite lower tourist traffic, the upcoming months will undoubtedly be a time of hard work for the Commission for



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the Sustainable Night-Time Economy to develop specific solutions before the next tourist season, which will not be possible without the active participation of all stakeholders in activities under #RespectKraków. We therefore encourage you to join the campaign and use the prepared materials, available at the Tourism Department's office or at the following address: wt.umk@um.krakow.pl.



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