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#RespectKraków - responsible tourism in the heart of the city

2026-06-30

Modern tourism is not only about discovering new places, but also about taking responsibility for their future. This idea underpins Kraków's #RespectKraków initiative. The project, implemented by the city authorities, promotes responsible attitudes among visitors to Kraków and builds the city's image as a place friendly to both residents and tourists.

Since 2019, the project has been carried out by the Tourism Department of the Kraków City Office. Its aim is to raise awareness of good coexistence among all participants in tourism, respect for the local community, and responsible use of urban infrastructure and services. An important element of the project is the co-creation of a coherent and attractive image of Kraków as a UNESCO World Heritage city offering a rich and diverse cultural life. The campaign promotes local cuisine based on traditions and regional products, and encourages visitors to explore lesser-known but equally interesting places beyond the main tourist routes.

An important aspect of the campaign is shaping responsible attitudes among visitors. They are encouraged to use the city's offerings consciously, with respect for its space and its residents. This particularly includes following social norms and public order regulations. In practice, it concerns issues such as observing quiet hours at night, using waste bins, and avoiding alcohol consumption in public places. This approach helps maintain a balance between the development of tourism and the quality of life for residents.

The first edition of the campaign was carried out as part of the European "Tourism Friendly Cities" project, funded by the URBACT programme. Participation allowed representatives of the Tourism Department to learn about the "Enjoy Respect Venezia" campaign. Solutions used in Italy inspired the creation of the #RespectKraków concept, adapted to local conditions and the specific character of the city. The project is also aligned with the "Sustainable Tourism Policy of Kraków for 2021-2028" and is based on dialogue and cooperation between key stakeholders: residents, tourists, and entrepreneurs.

Outdoor campaign

During the holiday season, the campaign's graphics and animations are highly visible in public transport communication channels and public space, significantly increasing their reach and recognition. They appear, among others, in public transport vehicles—on Bus TV screens—and at bus and tram stops, reaching both residents and the many tourists visiting Kraków.

The campaign also uses Kraków City Card ticket machines and modern digital citylight displays located in strategic high-traffic areas. Activities extend to Kraków Airport, where travelers are greeted in the baggage claim hall by an animation presenting key city rules in an accessible way. Thanks to this, visitors receive clear and practical guidance before even leaving the airport.

Additional measures introduced in the past year include "Respect Kraków" ads placed on tram seat backs and on the rear of buses. The campaign animation is also displayed in the Main Railway Station



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(PKP) hall, further strengthening the consistency and visibility of the message in key urban locations.

Local tourism and service-sector businesses are actively involved as well. Informational materials and campaign branding elements appear in hotels, restaurants, bars, and other places relevant to visitors. Through cooperation with local businesses, the campaign message remains consistent and widely present, supporting effective awareness-building and promoting responsible enjoyment of Kraków.

Online campaign

The “Respect Kraków” campaign is also conducted on social media and YouTube. In response to growing interest in Kraków, confirmed by tourism data, communication efforts target both international and domestic audiences.

By leveraging social media algorithms, the message reaches precisely defined groups that most frequently visit the city—both domestic tourists and visitors from the United Kingdom. Importantly, guidelines on proper behavior are also displayed locally on users’ mobile devices. In 2025, the online campaign generated over 13 million views across all communication channels.

In autumn 2025, the Respect Kraków website was launched: <https://respectkrakow.um.krakow.pl/>, containing basic information about the city and the campaign, addresses of information points, and practical materials for visitors. Access is facilitated, among other things, by QR codes placed on promotional materials.

City Helpers

With the beginning of the holiday season, City Helpers once again take to the streets of Kraków. Since 2021, these city assistants have actively supported efforts toward responsible tourism. Their presence has become a permanent element of the summer landscape in the city center and an important link in building positive relations between residents and visitors. From Monday to Thursday and on Sundays, they operate from 6:00 PM to 1:00 AM, and on Fridays and Saturdays until 2:00 AM, allowing better response to the challenges of nighttime city life.

City Helpers act as ambassadors of the Respect Kraków programme. Easily recognizable thanks to their distinctive attire, they are approachable and ready to help both tourists and residents. They mainly operate in the busiest areas of the city—Old Town, Kazimierz, and the Vistula Boulevards—where they provide assistance, answer questions, and respond to current needs, including disturbances in public space.

Their role is not only to help but also to educate. They remind people of the rules in cultural parks, inform about local regulations, and promote responsible use of the city. With their knowledge, they also encourage visitors to explore less obvious attractions beyond the strict city center, helping to disperse tourist traffic.

In carrying out their tasks, they cooperate with the Night Mayor, the Commission for Sustainable Night Economy, and the Municipal Guard, which provides them with specialized training, including crisis response and basic self-defense. Thanks to their presence, Kraków becomes a more organized, safe,



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Kraków**

and friendly space—for both residents and visitors who wish to experience the unique character of the capital of Małopolska in a conscious and responsible way.

The #RespectKraków initiative shows that tourism development can go hand in hand with care for residents' quality of life and the protection of cultural heritage. Sustainable tourism is a shared responsibility of all users of the city—only through mutual respect can its unique character be preserved for future generations.

This article is part of a series of publications by the Municipality of Kraków on the state of tourism in the city. The series aims to systematize key concepts and phenomena and to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in Kraków based on data. It also encourages active participation in social dialogue between residents, entrepreneurs, and local government.