



The tourist market in Kraków is in the process of a very conscious rebirth

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In March of the current year, Kraków City Council adopted the “Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kraków in the Years 2021-2028”. The document aims to develop an optimum management model for tourism in Kraków after the decline caused by COVID-19. The city is facing up to the situation and working together with the entire industry in order to revive tourism.

We are rebuilding tourism in a spirit of harmonious coexistence between residents – businesses – visitors. We are set on complete cooperation with representatives of the business environment, in an atmosphere of mutual dialogue and partnership, with respect to all groups of stakeholders. The measures we are undertaking are intended to strengthen the brand of Cracow as a historic city that cares for its unique cultural heritage and the natural environment – emphasises Elżbieta Kantor, Director of the Department of Tourism Municipality of Kraków.

Implementation of the “Sustainable Tourism Policy for Cracow in the Years 2021-2028”

In order to issue an invitation for joint implementation of the assumptions of the “Policy...”, over 50 meetings were held with the representatives of individual sectors of the city’s tourism economy. The series titled “Direction: A City for All” regarding the measures for sustainable tourism in Cracow was inaugurated in September. The works of executive groups carried out in November resulted in defining over 900 ideas for projects in line with the recommendations included in the “Policy...”. Works related to specific, concrete solutions will commence at the beginning of the year. Plans include establishing a Local Tourist Organisation in Kraków as a structure allowing for an effective implementation of the activities.

The city’s worldwide success - 61st ICAA Congress in Kraków

The acquisition of the 61st ICAA Congress in 2021 is a great success for the city. This is one of the key MICE events in the world; next year, our city is going to host nearly a thousand of the most experienced professionals in the field of organizing international conferences and congresses: destinations, venues, PCOs and associations. This is a prestigious event, which will be hosted in Poland for the first time. The event will contribute to the development and consolidation of the local and national MICE community and will provide an excellent opportunity to promote Kraków and our country. The process of selecting the host city was particularly detailed and involved multiple stages, spanning from spring 2020. Developing and submitting the city’s bid during the so-called new reality proved to be quite a challenge.

A chance for international promotion - “Lesser Poland - travel destination” partnership project

Department of Tourism Municipality of Kraków, together with the Malopolska Voivodeship local government and the Malopolska Tourist Organisation, is implementing a project aiming to promote tourism in Kraków and the Malopolska Region on selected foreign markets. It aims to re-establish the influx of tourists to Kraków and the region to the level from before the COVID-19 epidemic through introducing promotional and information campaigns on the internet and



social media. The project's budget was granted from the Regional Operational Programme for Malopolska and was initially set at PLN 8 million. An additional PLN 8 million has been allocated for the 2023 campaign, bringing the total to 16 million. The Kraków Convention Bureau is responsible for the implementation of the portion of the project concerning the promotion of business tourism.

City Helpers debut on the streets of Kraków

In 2021, Kraków continued its activities under the RespectKraków programme, which has been ongoing for 3 years. This summer, the city launched the City Helpers pilot project. On the streets of Kraków, specially trained city helpers provided tourist information and at the same time reminded people about the rules that should be observed in our city. The activities met with the great approval of residents and visitors alike, and the initiative received wide media coverage.

New routes on the map of Kraków

The year 2021 was a breakthrough for Fortress Kraków. The Tourism Department started to develop an integrated concept for creating a new tourism product, based on the valuable historical and landscape complex erected by the armed forces of the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian Empires at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century. The effects of these measures will be visible in the coming years.

The City of Kraków, together with its partners, has also inaugurated the “*Krakowianki*” project. It aims to present the profiles of women related to Kraków who, through their activities, have participated and continue to participate in the city's development. Department of Tourism Municipality of Kraków is developing the city's first historical tourist trail in cooperation with the PTTK Central Mountain Tourism Centre.

Promotion in the media

In 2021, the Tourism Department, together with the Department of Social Communication and the Malopolska Tourist Organisation, were involved in the implementation of the promotional campaign “And what do you see in Kraków”. The campaign involved numerous marketing activities, including press articles, and advertisements in travel portals and on the Internet.

Organising the short-term tourism rental

In accordance with the applicable laws, for several years now Kraków has been keeping a register of uncategorised facilities providing accommodation services for tourists, popularly known as short-term rentals for tourists. The *Krakowskie Obiekty Noclegowe* (eKON) application was provided in 2021 featuring a searchable list of facilities. The application is an important source of information for persons who wish to use legally operating accommodation providers. Currently, the register lists 1,755 registered facilities (approximately 29,000 beds). For comparison, there are nearly 200 categorised facilities with over 22,000 beds in Kraków. Short-term rentals for tourists play an important role for the reception of guests in the tourism sector. Considering its significant impact on life in European cities, it is necessary to regulate it



at EU level (amendment to the e-commerce directive). For this reason, Cracow has joined an alliance of European cities (22 cities) which are facing the consequences of the rapid development of short-term rentals for tourists. As part of the cooperation, it is going to share its practices and experience in order to develop a common position of the Alliance in the context of planned legislative changes at the EU level.

Tourism Forum and tourism forecasts for 2021 in Kraków

Just like every year, the Tourism Forum was held in December of this year. Data and forecasts regarding the volume of tourist traffic in 2021 were presented during the meeting, along with the characteristics of persons who visit Kraków. The positive information is that tourist traffic in Kraków in 2021 has increased by 20 percent in comparison to the year prior. A total of 11.3 million people visited the city, spending a total of PLN 5.5 billion. In connection with the ongoing pandemic and travel restrictions imposed globally, the tourists include mainly domestic visitors (10.4 million people). The expert team forecasts that 915,000 foreign visitors will come to Kraków by the end of 2021, mainly from the UK, Germany and France.

In summary, the measures taken this year are aimed at re-establishing tourism in Kraków. The experience of the recent months allows us to draw optimistic conclusions that the tourist market in Cracow is in the process of a very conscious rebirth, and good cooperation between its stakeholders brings the expected results.