

Record year for Kraków's tourist business

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Up to 10,050,000 tourists visited Kraków in 2015. That is 150,000 more than in 2014 - according to surveys conducted by Małopolska Tourist Organisation on behalf of the Kraków City Hall. The surveys' results were presented on Thursday, December 3, during the XXVI Touristic Forum - an annual rundown of the tourist season in Kraków.

- As you all know, Kraków has many assets, which is reflected in the statistics - by that, I mean a number of monuments unmatched by any other Polish city, a unique atmosphere or people who lived here, like Nobel Prize winners. I also think that the commissioned investments, such as the ICE Convention Centre and TAURON Arena Kraków, are stimulating the tourist branch development. We finally have an elaborate strategy for tourist business for the next season. It all contributes to increasing number of visitors to Kraków. However, what bothers us is the fact that the amount of money spent by tourists in 2015 is lower than that of the previous year. I hope we can find the cause of it during today's Forum - said Kraków Deputy Mayor in charge of Social Policies, Culture and City Promotion, Andrzej Kulig.

In 2015 Kraków has been visited by 10,050,000 people, 7,430,000 of whom are Polish tourists and 2,620,000 tourists from abroad. Most of them came to Kraków from Great Britain (15.76%) or Germany (13.16%). The number of Italian (from 10.2% in 2014 to 9.38% in 2015) and Ukrainian (from 4.5% to 1.63%) tourists dropped, while there was an increase in the number of tourists from France (from 7.10% to 8.36%), Russia (2.9% to 4.08%), Belgium (from 2% to 2.29%) and Sweden (from 1.6% in 2014 to 2.75% in 2015). As for the Polish tourists coming to Kraków, most of them came from Małopolska (18.7%), Silesia (11.49%), Mazovia (11.3%), Wielkopolska (9.6%) and Podkarpacie (7.9%) regions.

During their stay in Kraków, visitors spent over 4 billion 450 million zlotys (excluding the travel expenses and the price of accommodation paid in advance). In comparison: tourist expenditures in 2014 were about 50 million higher. The average costs of staying in Kraków for tourists from abroad are about 935 zlotys per person, and for Polish tourists about 270 zlotys per person.

-As many as the 96% of our visitors claim that they would recommend the visit in Kraków to their friends, and 81% declares the will of returning to Kraków someday. This is very important information, demonstrating how well our city is perceived and that its offer is targeted towards tourists. Such promising results would not be possible if not for the vast number of people working in tourist business. This number consists of nearly 20% of Kraków inhabitants, to whom we owe an acknowledgement - said Katarzyna Gądek from the Department of Tourism and Promotion of the Kraków City Administration.

The information that the visitors of our city have about Kraków come mostly from school (54.68%), family (48.84%), acquaintances (33.71%), television (21.34%), radio (15.88%), web (12.12%) and the press (6.15%).

When it comes to the main purposes of visiting Kraków, the predominant ones for Polish tourists are: sightseeing (26.2%), leisure (22.2%), religious purposes (6.5%), meetings with friends (5.2%), visiting family (4.8%), shopping (4.1%), and business meetings (6.1%). As for the foreigners, the most prevalent purposes of visiting Kraków are: sightseeing (36.2%), leisure



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(33.7%), entertainment (4.1%), visiting family (4.3%) and friends (3.8%), business meetings (3.4%). Both Polish and foreign tourists highly appreciated the city's friendly atmosphere, hospitality and kindness of its inhabitants as well as the quality of service, accommodation facilities, cultural events, gastronomy and entertainment.

The uncontested major tourist attraction still remains the Main Square (the Old Town and the Royal Road), followed by the Wawel Castle (the chambers, cathedral, Sigismund Bell, Wawel Dragon), the Kazimierz district, the Cloth Hall, St. Mary's Basilica, the Divine Mercy Sanctuary, Rynek Underground permanent exhibition, the Barbican, the Vistula boulevards and the Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory. Among the most appealing objects there were: the Cloth Hall, St. Mary's Basilica and the Divine Mercy Sanctuary.

During the XXVI Touristic Forum, being a summary of the touristic season in Kraków, apart from the presentation the subjects of the talks included the plans of advancement of the International Airport Kraków-Balice, preparations for the World Youth Day 2016, and the current activity of the Kraków Chamber of Tourism. The special guest of the meeting -the Director of the Foreign Branch of the Polish Tourist Organisation in Amsterdam, AndrzejPawluszek - presented thestrategy of promoting Poland on the Dutch market.