



Post-Covid tourism - what will it be like in Krakow?

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The city of Krakow is writing a new strategy for tourism policy, refreshing the formula and composition of the Krakow Tourism Forum and to co-create the final document "Krakow's Sustainable Tourism Policy for 2021-2028".

The draft of the new multi-annual tourism policy will not only replace the Krakow strategy for 2014-2020 expiring at the end of this year, but will also be a response to new circumstances and needs that have emerged as a result of the coronavirus epidemic. There is no doubt that the tourism industry needs support to regain its important role in socio-economic life. In Krakow, this sector generates approximately 40,000 jobs, and tourism economy entities contribute approximately PLN 250 million in the form of taxes and fees (5.25% of the city budget revenues) to the municipal budget. In 2019 alone, 14 million tourists visited Krakow, who spent PLN 7.5 billion during their stay in the Royal City.

According to the city authorities, the reconstruction of the industry should follow the concept of sustainable tourism development. This means shaping tourism in such a way that, on the one hand, it benefits the local community and the city, and, on the other hand, does not harm the cultural heritage, social bonds and the natural environment. This is a difficult task - it requires balancing the interests of various groups making up the urban community (residents, visitors, entrepreneurs, investors, students), as well as minimizing conflicts between them, and even within these communities. For in such a complex ecosystem of entities as tourism, diverse or extremely different points of view are natural.

The main goal of the tourism policy should be to constantly search for the level of values common to all stakeholders - those that increase the competitiveness of the enterprise, but also improve the living conditions of local communities, in the vicinity of which tourist service providers conduct their activities. One of such values, and at the same time a measure of the success of activities in this area, is the quality of the coexistence of residents and visitors. The draft strategy proposes the principles on which the new urban policy should be based (including the joint responsibility of entrepreneurs and residents, promoting solutions that build the atmosphere of a place and locality) as well as recommendations and sets of actions aimed at achieving the assumed goals (e.g. within the sharing economy, conflict management or night economy).

On October 6, during the inaugural meeting of the Krakow Tourism Forum with the Mayor of the City of Krakow - this body was re-established with an enlarged composition - the new assumptions of the city's strategy were discussed. The chairman of this meeting, Anna Korfel-Jasińska, deputy mayor of Krakow for education, sport and tourism, noted that when Krakow started working on the document, the situation of the tourism industry was completely different than it is today. However, it should be remembered that the postulates of a sustainable tourism economy have been raised for some time in many tourist cities, including Krakow, where, apart from the positive effects of the increase in tourist traffic, negative consequences have started to be noticed, especially those related to mass tourism. The drastic decline in tourist traffic meant that we have found ourselves in a completely different situation - the city is seeking the return of tourists, but at the same time gaining time to introduce changes in the current policy.



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The participants of the discussion in the Forum pointed to the need to support the tourism industry, especially in winter, when, for example, heating low-occupied hotel facilities, and providing a quality tourist offer (certified guides, Christmas markets with a unique regional offer), which will attract more informed and responsible tourists, will be required.