

## Initiatives dedicated to senior citizens

2021-02-25

The „stay at home” recommendations, dedicated shopping hours for senior citizens etc. are the manifestation of genuine care for older persons but, on the other hand, such actions encourage them to limit all activities, contacts and withdraw from social interactions, eventually leading to deterioration of the older persons’ quality of life and health, social isolation and sadness.

### Seniors Activity Centres during pandemic

Despite the advice from regional authorities, Kraków did not suspend the operation of the Seniors Activity Centres (SAC) network with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, but only prohibited the organization of all group meetings and activities. SAC coordinators continued to work part time at the Centres and the staff providing support for the participants of IT classes was available on-call. This made possible the organization of the **volunteer support network for SAC members and the involvement of older and young volunteers willing to meet various needs of senior citizens staying at home, as well as coordination of the cultural and educational activities online.**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in each of 42 Seniors Activity Centres at least 3 hours of online activities are offered each day, including: **language courses, memory trainings, dance classes, art classes, drama workshops, various gym classes, ICT classes, healthy eating courses as well as meetings with interesting personalities from the fields of science, art and culture. There are also online social meetings moderated by the SAC coordinators or volunteering senior citizens. Over 2.000 seniors participate in such projects.**

To facilitate participation in the above listed online activities and to provide general assistance to our senior citizens during the pandemic, each Seniors Activity Centre organizes on-call **tech support** for elderly persons who want to take part in the dedicated online activities but have difficulties using the computer or problems with establishing a connection.

The need to stay active, to maintain social interactions, and the growing belief in the undeniable importance and value of information technology during pandemic resulted in significant reduction of digital exclusion among senior citizens in Kraków. It was possible thanks to dozens of computer skills trainings as well as smartphone and tablet operation instruction classes that have long been organized by the Municipality of Krakow. During these trainings senior citizens were given advice on what equipment to buy and how to sign an agreement with the internet provider. In all the above actions, intended to help older persons to embrace technology, the Municipality of Kraków partnered with Krakow’s NGOs whose role in these initiatives has been substantial.

### Events and activities for senior citizens

With the intention to lift up our senior citizens’ spirits, the symphonic orchestra and opera singers performed in a Christmas Concert organized in ICE Congress Centre on 8 December 2020. We were proud to see over 12.000 people viewing this online event live. The concert transmission is still



**Magiczny  
Kraków**

available here: [Koncert dla Seniorów - YouTube](#) or via following website: <https://dlaseniora.krakow.pl>

On 13 January 2021 the carnival concert for grandparents and grandchildren „Z piosenką w Nowy Rok” (March into the New Year with a Song) took place online on the occasion of Grandmother’s Day and Grandfather’s Day. This concert was broadcasted live from the hall and the entrance steps of Juliusz Słowacki Theatre in Krakow. It hit over 15.000 views.

Pétanque – Pétanque tournaments for senior citizens, accompanied by instruction sessions, are organized on bouledromes, in line with all sanitary restrictions.

Call a senior citizen! – elderly people who feel abandoned and lonely can have phone chats about life and the affairs of the world with some nice and friendly Jagiellonian University students. Such conversations can often lead to long lasting intergenerational friendships.

### **Services for senior citizens**

**Assistant of the older persons** - persons 85+ are offered assistance. For senior citizens who live alone and experience difficulties with going for a walk, shopping, visiting a library or a doctor’s office on their own, the City finances services of assistants. Assistants keep company to such persons, go with them for walks or shopping, and encourage them to undertake the activities suitable for their age and condition.

**"Złota Rączka" (The Jack of all trades)** - the 65+ senior citizens have access to cost free help with small home repairs.

**Podiatry services** – free podiatry services are offered to persons 85+