



**Magiczny  
Kraków**

## **Kraków on the OWHC Board of Directors**

2025-01-13

**During the 17th Congress of the Organisation of World Heritage Cities held in Cordoba, Spain, the Mayor of the City of Kraków Aleksander Miszalski was elected a member of the Board of Directors for the term 2024 - 2026.**

Kraków will thus be among the cities with a significant influence on setting the direction of OWHC's activities in the next two years.

OWHC is an international, non-governmental organisation founded on 8 September 1993 in the Moroccan city of Fez. It brings together almost 200 cities inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The General Secretariat of the World Heritage Cities Organisation is located in Québec (Canada) and, together with five regional secretariats (assigned to specific geographical areas), pursues the objectives of OWHC. These are: to ensure the exchange of experience between member cities in the field of revitalisation of historic cities, as well as to participate in projects and programmes related to the management of historic cities and to develop new solutions for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage.

Along with Kraków, the mayors of Dubrovnik (Croatia), Córdoba (Spain), Quebec (Canada), Bruges (Belgium), Cuenca (Ecuador), San Antonio (USA) and Angra de Heroísmo (Portugal) will work together on the OWHC Board of Directors. Thus, the Board brings together diverse perspectives on the issue of cultural heritage management and joint responsibility.

Participation in the OWHC Congress was the first activity in an international forum for Mayor Aleksander Miszalski. It was a challenging task to win a seat on the Board of Directors and to participate in a mayor's panel on one of the symposium's strategic axes, dedicated to city refreshment through the introduction of greenery. Under the circumstances, it is all the more valuable to gain recognition for Kraków under its new leadership and its vision of how to manage this city - in view of the numerous challenges arising from the concern for a high quality of life for its inhabitants. Since the various aspects of working towards habitability - living conditions in a city that are friendly to its inhabitants - that were the main theme of the Symposium.

In his candidacy presentation, Mayor Aleksander Miszalski emphasised that this was the first opportunity for him to learn and at the same time to share a personal perspective on the realisation of the goals and aspirations of network cities that are facing similar challenges in times of intense climate and social change. Above all, however, he stressed that he wanted to bring the potential for continuity combined with new insights and dynamism.

The organisation gathers small cities and metropolises, well-known and internationally recognised like Kraków, and small ones like Visby (Sweden) or Angra de Heroísmo (Portugal). Their phenomenon is the community's sense of responsibility for heritage, which - in practice - is a challenge and a task, and generates not only profits but also significant costs related to the financing of historic preservation and, above all, social pressures: conservation restrictions, consequences for managers



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and residents, overtourism, among others. In this respect, the issues with which cities come to OWHC congresses are specific tasks to be solved. For this reason, taking inspiration and experiences from other cities is very practical.

In the concluding session of the congress Symposium, the value of the inspiration that cities take from the presentations was mentioned many times. Among them were Kraków's green implementations, and the words of the Mayor of Kraków were quoted on many occasions. The Symposium was a considerable operational step forward for all member cities, and the projects will continue with the Path of Cordoba and the Quebec Roadmap - strategic projects of the OWHC.

The World Congress of the OWHC in Cordoba was an important international meeting - in a global, but also in a local perspective - of the Central and Eastern Europe Region. Kraków is a member of the Regional Secretariat coordinated by the City of Warsaw. In our region, we are active in educational projects, competitions to promote heritage among children and youth, and we help the cities and people of Ukraine. The participants of the congress thanked the Mayor of Kraków with applause for years of Krakovians support for the Ukrainian community.