International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)

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International Congress and Convention Association was established in 1963 by travel agencies with the aim to merge the sector of tourism with the growing market for international conventions and information exchange. ICCA is the only association representing main specialists in organising, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events. It comprises almost 1000 member companies and organisations in 88 countries worldwide. The Head Office can be found in Amsterdam. ICCA has three regional offices: in Maleysia, Uruguay and in the USA.

Each year the association organises a series of workshops, trainings and conferences, aimed at a stable development of associated members. Moreover, ICCA offers the largest database of clients organising international meetings and congresses as well as a database of regular business meetings available only to associated parties. Each year it organises surveys on worldwide business tourism and Krakow has taken part in them for several years.

For Krakow the ICCA membership is an opportunity to:

- win international association meetings business in a cost-effective way,
- link up and do business on a senior and global networking platform representing all sectors of the meetings industry,
- attend a strong, custom-designed education programme for senior industry practitioners,
- strengthen its competitiveness in the international meetings field

The ICCA membership is not only prestigious but also has a significant promotional value. It is a chance to bring big congresses, conferences and other events to Krakow. As the analyses of tourism surveys conducted since 2008 clearly indicate, the market of meetings industry in Krakow is developing. Business visitors expenditure in Krakow in 2011 was estimated at approx. PLN 286m, which had a noticeable influence on the increase of the city's income (Meeting industry in Krakow in 2011 Final report, Foundation of the Krakow University of Economics, Krakow, 2011). Moreover, the report "Meetings industry in Krakow in 2011" by the Foundation of the Krakow University of Economics indicates that expectations of business infrastructure managers in the city in relation to

the cooperation with the Krakow Convention Bureau involve mainly joined efforts to attract high-profile congresses and conferences, which can certainly be facilitated by the ICCA membership. The association comprises approx. 200 convention bureaus and other institutions involved in the promotion of business tourism in cities around the world, e.g. in Brisbane, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Chicago, Dubrovnik, Hamburg, Paris, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Helsinki, London or Liverpool. Key Krakow Professional Conference Organisers (PCO) have enjoyed benefits of the ICCA membership for several years. Another member who also recommended the ICCA accession is the Gdansk Convention Bureau, which emphasised the high profile of the ICCA training programme focused on marketing of cities, regions, country, as well as individual conference venues. ICCA membership is valuable also because of the necessity to attract large events to the newly constructed venues in Krakow: the Convention Centre (in Rondo Grunwaldzkie) and sports and events arena in Czyżyny. It gives access to the database of organisers of regular conferences and congresses around the world, allowing their direct access and attracting such events to the city.

Coordination of cooperation:
The Department of Information, Tourism and City Promotion is the coordinator of Krakow's participation in the organization's activities.