



How can we revive tourism after the pandemic?

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On 21 September, the representatives of the Krakow tourism sector discussed the joint implementation of tourism-related activities in Krakow. It was the first meeting in the series entitled “Direction: A city for everyone - Sustainable Tourism Policy”. The main topic of debates and discussions was the directions and possibilities of working together to restore tourism in Krakow after the halt caused by the pandemic.

The document adopted by the Krakow City Council has the goal of developing an optimal model for managing tourism in Krakow after the COVID-19 pandemic. “I cannot imagine that we could be talking about tourism without you”, said the Mayor of Krakow, Jacek Majchrowski, when opening the meeting. “Therefore, I encourage all of us gathered around Krakow’s tourism industry to work together for sustainability, i.e. to reconcile the interests of residents, entrepreneurs and visitors. We want all the energy that has been put into all these activities to serve the common good, which is the city of Krakow”, added the Mayor.

The author of the document, Dr Bartłomiej Walas, pointed out that sustainable tourism is about sharing responsibility and minimising conflicts. This means that the concept of sustainable tourism in a historic city should be understood as a process in which the consequences of tourists’ behaviour and business models of local service providers do not cause losses or changes that are difficult to reverse in ecology, space and social and economic relations.

The Director of the Tourism Department, Elżbieta Kantor, outlined nine recommendations included in “Krakow’s Sustainable Tourism Policy for 2021–2028”, which were divided into three groups: Economy and Regulations, Marketing, and Programmes and Products. Each of the groups includes people who declared a willingness to cooperate during workshop meetings scheduled for the coming months. Director Kantor said that these lists are still open.

“The Policy is a set of recommendations and guidelines and we will work together to implement them all. The main task is to integrate the stakeholders around the challenges of the document”, Kantor said. “The conversations I have had with the representatives of the tourism sector fill me with optimism. Once again, we invite all those who care about the reconstruction of sustainable Krakow tourism to joint action”, she added.

During the first debate, entitled “Shared responsibility and cooperation: Are we ready for sustainable tourism?”, led by Robert Piaskowski, the Mayor’s representative for culture, the participants wondered what shared responsibility means for the sustainable tourism policy and what challenges those implementing the policy may face. The participants of the debate emphasised that cooperation is a critical factor to achieving these goals, and cooperation itself builds a positive image of our city.

It was also noted that good communication is needed between all groups of the local community and that special attention should be paid to effective quality communication to the residents in order to build awareness of the benefits of tourism for our city and increase social satisfaction. Moreover, the participants of the debate argued that the urban community consists of only two groups, tourists and residents, but some of the residents are also businesspeople. This inspires us to reflect on building the city in which we want to live.



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The second debate, “Can Local Tourism Organisation (LOT) be a new tool in the implementation of Krakow’s Sustainable Tourism Policy for 2021–2028?”, was hosted by Grzegorz Soszyński, an expert on the tourism sector. The participants listed arguments that will be crucial for considering an establishment of an LOT. It was noted that the Local Tourist Organisation, as a partnership structure, may be a platform for implementing projects included in “Krakow’s sustainable tourism policy for 2021–2028”. Based on the example of other Polish cities, it was also pointed out that such an organisation could improve the efficiency and flexibility of tourism management. Another subject mentioned was raising funds for projects in order to increase the scale and scope of the organisation’s activities. The initiative to establish an LOT in Krakow met with the interest of the representatives of the tourism sector.

The meeting took place at the Potocki Palace, Rynek Główny 20, which is a new urban space for the exchange of ideas and experiences. The next meetings are planned within the three groups.