

Krakow to host the 61st ICCA Congress!

2022-02-25

We are proud to announce that Krakow has been selected as the host city for the 61st ICCA Congress in 2022! Hosting the International Congress and Convention Association is a huge success not only for the city of Krakow, but for the entire country.

The ICCA Congress is one of the most important events in the global meetings industry, every year bringing together about a thousand of the most experienced experts in organising international conferences and congresses, representing destinations, facilities, PCO companies and associations. The Congress will be organised in Poland for the first time, which on the one hand proves the mature position of the industry in our country, and on the other, creates great opportunities for its further development – said the Mayor of Krakow, Jacek Majchrowski.

The bidding for hosting the Congress was multi-stage and detailed and began in the spring of 2020. The very development and submission of the city's offer during the uncertain times of the pandemic was a huge challenge. It is worth mentioning that during the selection phase, two virtual inspections were performed. For the first inspection that lasted almost five hours, 4 films were produced in a record short time – over 30 entities from the MICE industry were engaged and the entire presentation was broadcast live from a virtual studio. Thanks to the professionalism and cooperation of all partners operating at the host committee, we finally managed to beat our competitors – Athens and Bangkok – explains Małgorzata Przygórska-Skowron, Manager of the Krakow Convention Bureau operating at the Tourism Department of the Krakow City Hall.

This success is due to the cooperation of the local industry representatives, headed by the Krakow Convention Bureau, as well as the entire team of the ICE Krakow Congress Centre, Symposium Cracoviense, CMA Concept Music Art, Alwernia Planet, Stara Zajezdnia by DeSilva, Sheraton Grand Krakow, Radisson Blu Hotel Krakow and Park Inn by Radisson Krakow. The involvement of partners from all over Poland who supported Krakow's bid cannot be overemphasised. Support for the event was declared by: Ministry of Development, Labour and Technology; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; LOT Polish Airlines; Polish Tourism Organisation headed by the Poland Convention Bureau, SKKP Association and MPI Poland Chapter; local Congress Offices from Warsaw, Poznań, Wrocław and Łódź, and members of ICCA from Poland, including the following companies: Mazurkas Travel, Targi w Krakowie, and MTP Group.

2022 will be a great time for the Polish meetings industry to celebrate. Next year, the Krakow Convention Bureau will celebrate its 18th birthday and will have the opportunity to present its maturity and readiness to host events at the highest level. 2022 also marks the 10th anniversary of Kraków joining the group of ICCA members.

Rafał Szlachta, the President of the Polish Tourism Organisation, adds that in 2022 the Poland Convention Bureau, operating within the structures of the Polish Tourism Organisation, will celebrate its 20th birthday and the 20th anniversary of its membership in ICCA. This is a great time to show our Polish hospitality and share our cultural and intellectual heritage with the ICCA delegates, but also to show our latest achievements, including those related to tourist and business infrastructure. 'I believe that this event will contribute to the recovery and further development of the Polish meetings industry after the Covid-19 pandemic and will be a moving

spirit in our future promotional activities at home and abroad', emphasises the President of the Polish Tourism Organisation.

All these anniversaries coincide perfectly, marking the new stage the Polish meetings industry is entering with its hosting of the ICCA Congress. It will be a great opportunity for Krakow and Poland to promote our destinations, show the highest standard conference facilities and the professionalism of service providers. The organisation of the Congress will provide the Polish meetings industry access to the knowledge of experts from all over the world. Moreover, since the Congress events are always at the highest level in terms of content and innovation of solutions, it will be not only an opportunity to become acquainted with the current trends, but also to set them.

The hosting of ICCA Congress in Krakow is the result of the city's consistent policy in developing business tourism. This is another milestone in fulfilling the strategic vision, which was initiated by the establishment of the Krakow Convention Bureau, and then by the opening of three large facilities in 2014: ICE Krakow Congress Centre, TAURON Arena Krakow and EXPO Krakow – says Elżbieta Kantor, Director of the Tourism Department of the Krakow City Hall. The next stage was the creation, in 2020, of the strategic document, 'Krakow's Sustainable Tourism Policy for 2021-2028'. The document deals with the need to develop a modern model of sustainable tourism economy through, inter alia, building the city's quality and reputation through congresses and conferences. By organising the ICCA Congress, Krakow is demonstrating its ambition to make the meetings industry one of the pillars of sustainable tourism and a key tool to help the city to rebound after the pandemic. But Krakow will also offer ICCA all its uniqueness and prestige, all the creative energy of the team, the hospitality of the residents, and the commitment of the city authorities.

We are sure that the ICCA Congress will leave lasting traces in the city, and its influence will be mutually reinforcing. If we make good use of the opportunities the Congress provides, it will also contribute to the development and consolidation of the MICE industry throughout Poland – adds Izabela Błaszczuk, Director of the Krakow Festival Office, Operator of the ICE Krakow Congress Centre.

'The ICCA Congress, which is held in Krakow next year, is one of the key tasks that we undertake to consolidate the position of our city as a leader in organising business events in this part of Europe. We invite to the capital of Lesser Poland world-class experts and professionals who decide on the directions of development of the meetings industry on a global scale', says Izabela Błaszczuk, Director of KBF, which is the Operator of the ICE Kraków Congress Centre. 'We are going to make good use of this opportunity because the organisation of congresses and conferences is one of the pillars of the recently adopted policy of sustainable tourism of the city of Krakow for the years 2021-2028. We have taken this path and we know that this is the right decision, because business tourism already represents a significant part of Krakow's economy. Organisation of further big and important events in the future is our priority for the coming years', adds Director Błaszczuk.

This year, the ICCA Congress is taking place in Cartagena, Colombia, from 24 to 27 October. Due to the ongoing pandemic, hubs were also arranged in several other places, on each continent, and with an online component. Next year's congress will be held from 13 to 16



**Magiczny
Kraków**

November at the ICE Krakow Congress Centre.

ICCA, the International Congress and Convention Association, was founded in 1963 by travel agencies to promote cooperation between its members in the face of a rapidly developing international conference market. It is the only association that includes the best experts in the field of handling, transport, and organising international events. The ICCA network consists of over 1,195 entities: service providers, companies and organisations from 92 countries around the world. Annual ICCA congresses are hosted alternately by the member countries. This year the event is hosted by Cartagena, Colombia; previous editions were held in Kaohsiung, Houston, Dubai, Prague and Kuching.