

# INTEGRATED TOURISM MANAGEMENT FOR A LIVABLE HISTORIC CENTRE

## Tourism Management Strategy – Krakow, Poland

### 1. DESCRIPTION

The City of Kraków has implemented an integrated tourism management strategy based on its strategic framework, the Kraków Sustainable Tourism Policy 2021–2028, launched in 2019 and ongoing. Krakow's strategy combines multiple coordinated initiatives, including the Respect Kraków campaign, the City Helpers program, cultural parks, the development of new tourism products and spaces, and the establishment of a Night Mayor and a Commission for making a sustainable night-time economy. The initiative aims to balance tourism attractiveness with residents' quality of life while ensuring the protection of the historic centre.

### 2. CONTEXT THAT MOTIVATED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRACTICE

Kraków faced increasing pressure from mass tourism, particularly in its historic centre. Key challenges included high tourist concentration in the Old Town, significant night-time disturbances (noise, alcohol consumption in public spaces), the rise of short-term rentals, and growing tensions between residents, visitors, and local businesses. As tourism remains a major economic sector, the objective was not to reduce it but to better regulate and rebalance it to preserve the habitability of the historic centre.

### 3. APPROACH/METHOD

- **Awareness and communication:** Launch of the Respect Kraków campaign (since 2019), targeting tourists, residents, and visitors through multi-channel communication (social media, transport, airport, QR codes). The campaign provides practical guidance to encourage respectful behaviour in the city.
- **Regulation and heritage protection:** Implementation of cultural parks as legal tools to regulate signage, public space use, terraces, and protect the urban landscape.
- **Mediation and field observation:** Deployment of City Helpers (seasonal ambassadors) who inform visitors, promote less-visited places, manage disturbances, monitor compliance, and collect data on night-time activities.
- **Diversification and spatial redistribution:** Development of new products and tourism areas (e.g., Wesola district) to reduce pressure on the historic centre and redistribute visitor flows in the city.

- **Night-time governance:** Creation of a Night Mayor and a dedicated commission, ensuring coordination between municipal services, police, and private stakeholders, alongside guidelines for local businesses.
- **Data collection on short-term rental facilities:** A municipal register has been introduced to provide a clearer understanding of the scale of short-term rental activity and to identify the city's opportunity to collect revenue from these business operations.



“City Helpers” Program - Copyright © Krakow Convention Bureau and Respect Krakow

#### 4. EXPECTED/IMMEDIATE/MEASURABLE EFFECTS

##### Measurable results

- Over 13 million views of the Respect Kraków campaign (2025).
- More than 500 night-time observations collected by City Helpers.
- Identification of nearly 2,500 short-term rental facilities throughout the municipal register

##### Immediate effects

- Better identification of night-time “hotspots.”
- Improved coordination between municipal services.
- Increased visibility and enforcement of public space regulations.

##### Expected effects

- Gradual reduction of night-time disturbances.
- Improved quality of life for residents.
- Better territorial balance of tourism flows.
- Strengthened dialogue among public authorities, private actors, and residents.

## 5. KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Tourism management must prioritize habitability, not only attractiveness, ensuring coexistence between residents and visitors.
- Integrating regulation, communication, and on-the-ground mediation is essential to manage tourism sustainably in historic centres.
- Data collection (e.g., through City Helpers and big data) is a key lever for informed decision-making.
- Diversifying tourist flows beyond the historic centre reduces pressure and enhances urban balance.
- Strong governance mechanisms (e.g., Night Mayor) enable coordinated and inclusive management of complex urban dynamics.



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### FOR MORE INFORMATION :

<https://www.urban-initiative.eu/ia-cities/krakow/home>

<https://ekon.um.krakow.pl/en>

<https://krakowheritage.com/en/material-heritage/forms-of-protection/cultural-parks/>

