



An ever-growing international community in Kraków

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Kraków is increasingly popular among international community not only as a tourist destination, but also as a place to work and live. Foreign children in kindergartens and schools used to be a rare sight a decade ago, and these days one would be hard-pressed not to find them in any major institution. The number of international students at Kraków's universities is also growing every year. One in four students at the Jagiellonian University came from abroad, and in the case of the Academy of Music, it is about 17%.

This increased immigration influx contributed to the creation of the Multiculturalism & Migration Observatory - the result of an agreement between the Krakow City Hall and Cracow University of Economics, which came into being on July 2019. "One of the key inspirations for the establishment of the Observatory was the need to better understand immigrant communities, to track how their presence changes and shapes the fabric of the city and to diagnose the challenges and barriers faced by international communities in the process of integration", says Dr Konrad Pędziwiatr, professor at the Cracow University of Economics and coordinator of the Observatory.

The key part of the Observatory's activities focuses on the detailed reports analysing the migration processes in Kraków, as well as the changes in the urban community caused by them. Their recommendations contribute to better management of migration processes, as well as to proper use of the individual and collective potential of foreigners. The Observatory also holds seminars, which serve as a meeting place for people interested in migration processes, integrating academic, city and voivodeship-level efforts to better understand migration in urban and rural spaces. The research carried out by the Observatory using a wide variety of methods revealed the size of the immigrant population in Kraków, as well as key demographic and socio-economic characteristics. It also enabled identifying the places of the greatest concentration of immigrants in the city and to describe their situation within the framework of the Polish education system. The project managed to identify the significant changes in Kraków's religious landscape that have occurred in recent years with the increased influx of immigrants from many regions of the world.

More information about the observatory can be found at <https://owim.uek.krakow.pl/>

Joanna Dymanus, Secretary of the Multiculturalism Migration Observatory