

REVITALISATION OF THE POST-INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT OF ZABŁOCIE RING OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND PLANET LEM



Zabłocie is a post-industrial part of the Podgórze district located on the right bank of the Vistula River, opposite to Kazimierz and Grzegórzki. The size of the quarter is similar to the area occupied by the Old Town. The area is crossed by a railway line with the recently completed Kraków-Zabłocie station. The district was first mentioned in historical sources as early as in 1334. At the turn of the 20th century, numerous industrial plants were established here; however, after 1989, with the liquidation of many state enterprises, the area gradually deteriorated. In the late 1990s, actions were taken to revitalise this district, which brought it to what it is today – one of the most dynamically developing areas of Krakow.

The centre of Zabłocie district is taken by the **Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory**, made famous by Thomas Keneally's 1982 novel "Schindler's Ark", filmed in 1993 by Steven Spielberg. Since 2010, the factory buildings have housed a branch of the Museum of Krakow, which is visited by almost 400,000 people annually. Right next to the Factory, the **MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art** is situated, and further afield, there are also the **Cricoteka Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor** and the **Podgórze Museum**. In recent years, a new bridge on the Vistula River and a tram line to Płaszów have been built in the area, as well as Stacja Zabłocie park and residential buildings that partially use spaces formerly occupied by factories. The area has become home to art studios, galleries and creative agencies, as well as fashionable cafés and bars.

In order to close the ring of cultural institutions on the right bank of the Vistula River, the City Council of Krakow decided to establish the **Planet Lem Centre for Literature and Language** in Zabłocie, which will encompass an 18th-century salt warehouse, also formerly used as Austrian army barracks, located at 8 Na Zjeździe Street. By the end of 2023, the building, extended eastwards, with its proportions and silhouette kept intact, will have become a modern cultural venue, intended for exhibitions, events, festivals and literary education. It is to be both a socially vibrant space, as well as a place of recreation due to its garden character and the use of the context of the nearby Bohaterów Getta Square, an important point of interest for Krakow tours. The venue will bear the name of Stanisław Lem – a writer, philosopher and futurologist associated with Krakow, one of the most popular Polish authors of international fame. The investment has been included in the cultural development programme and it culminates the strategy carried out by Krakow since 2013 in connection with becoming the **UNESCO City of Literature**.

