*Press Release*

**THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF WRC CROATIA RALLY ANNOUNCED**

**A total of 58 crews from all around the world have announced their participation and the organizers expect that this years event will surpass the results from previous years.**

**Zagreb, 22. March 2023**. – WRC Croatia Rally representatives have announced this year’s edition of the event which will be held from April 20 till April 23 in five Croatian counties – Varaždin, Krapina – Zagorje, Zagreb, Karlovac, Primorje – Gorski Kotar and City of Zagreb. A total of 58 crews from all around the world have announced their participation and they will have to tackle 20 extremely attractive Special Stages. The most famous names include the eight-time world champion and winner of the 2021 Croatia Rally, France's **Sebastien Ogier**, the reigning world champion, Finland's **Kalle Rovanpera** and currently second in the Championship standings, Belgium's **Thierry Neuville**.

The event will begin with a ceremonial start at an already established location, near Zagreb Fountains, and the service parking will be near the INA building at Većeslav Holjevac Avenue. The total length of the itinerary is 1650 km, out of which 301 km is length of Special Stages, and this year there will be a Finish ramp next to the INA building.

At the previous two editions of the WRC competition in Croatia, the winner was decided literally in the last meters, so the spectators have enjoyed the uncertain finals. Both times Toyota crews celebrated, marking their way to the World Champion title at the Croatia Rally. In 2021. Sebastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia, and 2022 Kalle Rovanpera and Jonne Halttunen. One Itinerary change has also been added to this year's schedule; instead of the Special Stage Jaškovo – Mali Modruš Potok, the Ravna Gora – Skrad test will be driven. One thing is certain – the Croatian rally goes through a variety of terrains and is therefore specific in the world.

"Our story is growing and looking really good. Major events in Croatia have had challenges in recent years, but we believe that this year we are heading for a more stable time. The number of spectators can only grow and we are preparing for that. Surely we are expecting an uncertain rally that will be followed by a large number of announced foreign journalists. We hope that year after year we will grow more and gather even more fans of motorsport," said **Daniel Šaškin, president of the organizing committee of the WRC Croatia Rally.**

Last year, according to the professional study of the Faculty of Economics and Business in Zagreb, WRC Croatia Rally brought over 105 million euros to Croatian tourism, with more than 310 thousand spectators who followed the competition and as many as 400 media representatives who arrived from Croatia and abroad. The data indicate that this is one of the most promising sports events in Croatia and the region, whose contribution to the development of the tourist offer and the promotion of Croatia in the future can only grow further. Organizers hope to reach as many as half a million people in the audience this year.

"WRC has achieved many benefits for the Croatian economy and sports, and we are trying to use the great media reach to promote other valuable organizers and athletes in our system. At the same time, our numerous officials learn directly from the world's best officials and create an even better and safer environment for the development of sports in our country", commented **Davorin Štetner, president of the Croatian Auto and Karting Federation.**

The press conference was also attended by representatives of the City of Zagreb and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. **State Secretary of the Ministry,** **Josip Pavić**, also addressed reporters: *"Everyone would be glad if there were more and more such events. We know how many domestic and foreign spectators are attracted to this event and we are pleased to say that the people in the WRC Croatia Rally are role models for others in organizing such events. The co-financing agreement is valid this year and the next one, so we will definitely use this event in the tourism development strategy."*

A few days ago, applications were closed for volunteers who will contribute the event with their work along the entire track. As in previous years, the interest is huge and interested fans of motorsport from all over Europe are coming forward. Especially surprising are applications from distant countries such as the USA and Japan.

Daily tickets for WRC Croatia Rally can be purchased at a price of 10 euros, and a four-day ticket package is available at a price of 30 euros. In addition to the entrance to all Fan Zones with Special Stages, all tickets are also valid for Service park. Regular tickets are available online through the [ulaznice.hr](https://www.ulaznice.hr/web/?lang=en) website.

***WRC Croatia 2023 - Itinerary***

* **Thursday (April 20)**
	+ Shakedown Okić *(Zagreb county)*
	+ Ceremonijalni start *(City of Zagreb)*
* **Friday (April 21)**
	+ Mali Lipovec - Grdanjci *(Zagreb county)*
	+ Stojidraga - Hartje *(Zagreb county)*
	+ Krašić - Vrškovac *( Zagreb county / Karlovac county)*
	+ Pećurkovo Brdo - Mrežnički Novaki *(Karlovac county)*
* **Saturday (April 22)**
	+ Kostanjevac - Petruš Vrh *(Zagreb county / Karlovac county)*
	+ Vinski Vrh - Duga Resa *(Karlovac county)*
	+ Ravna Gora - Skrad *(Primorje – Gorski Kotar county)*
	+ Platak *(Primorje – Gorski Kotar county)*
* **Sunday (April 23)**
	+ Trakošćan - Vrbno *(Varaždin county)*
	+ Zagorska Sela - Kumrovec *(Krapina Zagorje county)*
	+ Podium *(City of Zagreb)*

Detailed Itinerary as available at [website Croatia Rally.](https://rally-croatia.com/en/spectators/itinerary-2023)