

**Figure 2.** Geographical location of the research area showing the locations of meteorological/air pollution monitoring stations. Meteorological stations of the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management – National Research Institute (marked in black): (A) Krakow-Balice, (B) SODAR; Monitoring stations of the National Environmental Monitoring (NEM) (marked in white): (1) Krasinski Avenue, (2) Bulwarowa Street, (3) Bujaka Street.

## 2 Purpose of the study

The episodes of high PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations in Krakow prompted the city authorities to develop a system that will provide residents with access to free public transport when the limit of 8 hours of concentration is to be exceeded the next day. The implementation of an air quality forecasting system to control public transport imposes the obligation to exercise the utmost care in modelling. An inaccurate forecast is associated with the risk of the city budget incurring either unjustified costs (by multiplying the air quality forecast) or social (health) costs, which are difficult to estimate for an underestimated air quality forecast. In the specific conditions prevailing in Krakow, mainly local factors of stagnation, such situations are not uncommon. An additional element that makes it difficult to correctly forecast air quality using a deterministic model is the inability to provide an accurate emission inventory. Given this state of affairs, methods are needed to frame air quality forecasts, in particular, time trend forecasts of the absolute value of PM<sub>10</sub> concentration. The long-term activity of Doppler SODAR in Krakow and the analysis of the impact of atmospheric stability conditions on air quality gave the opportunity to use the results of these measurements to improve the air quality forecasting system (Bajorek-Zydrón and Weżyk, 2016).

## 3 Materials and methods

The work uses two data sources:

- Data from the selected Inspectorate for Environmental Protection/National Environmental Monitoring (IEP/NEM) (105 automatic air quality monitoring stations based in Krakow, data from 2015 to March 2022).
- Measurements of SODAR tags from 2017–March 2022.

The station characteristics and locations are shown in Table 1, and the station codes are shown in Figure 2.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of monitoring stations in Krakow.

Monitoring network/ Owner/ Symbol on the map	Name/Location of the monitoring station	Measured elements	Averaging time / Measurement type	GPS coordinates		Altitude m A.S.L.	Type of area/ Station type
				Latitude φ N	Longitude λ E		
No 1	Krasinski Ave.	PM <sub>10</sub>	1 hour Automatic	50°03'27.6"	19°55'34.3"	207	urban / commercial
No 2	Bulwarowa Str.	PM <sub>10</sub>	1 hour Automatic	50°04'09.5"	20°03'12.6"	195	urban / industrial
No 3	Rocker Str.	PM <sub>10</sub>	1 hour Automatic	50°00'38.1"	19°56'57.1"	223	urban / background round

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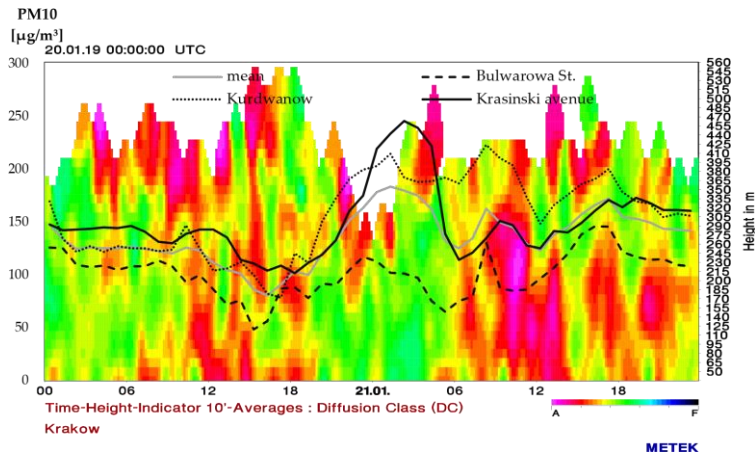


Figure 4. PM10 concentrations at selected Environmental Monitoring Stations in Krakow and the average measurements as at 20 January 2019, compared to atmospheric stability classes calculated based on SODAR data.

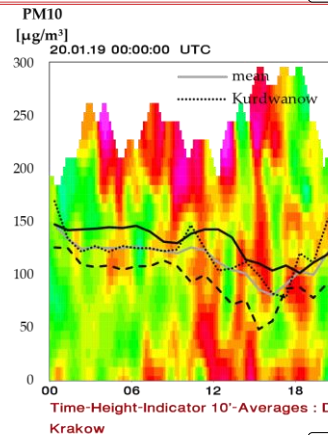
The lack of a clear relationship between the high DC obtained from the visualization of SODAR data and the simultaneous high concentration of PM10 dust in stagnant weather conditions (high pressure system, low wind speed, temperature inversion conditions) suggests that the SODAR data concerning only DC is insufficient for a precise diagnosis and prediction of the episodes of high PM10 concentrations. In view of the above, it was decided to use properly processed data of the SODAR spectrum, assuming that this would allow for a more thorough analysis of ventilation conditions.

### 3.2.2 Preparation of SODAR data filtration

To build the PM10 concentration forecast, the basic results of SODAR measurements as a spectrum were used, i.e. a set of amplitudes of signals returning to the SODAR receiver from the reflection of sound transmission of a single frequency. Finding the required information in this way seemed to be the most promising option given the purpose of the study (which was to analyse the ventilation conditions of air in the atmosphere). When a signal is reflected through different layers of the atmosphere, it becomes scattered. The spectrum was recorded on 32 frequency channels around the transmission frequencies. In a homogeneous atmosphere, the spectra should take the form of noise. An initial transformation was required to improve the transparency of the basic data of the SODAR spectrum. After analysing the spectrum for all altitudes and on different dates, it was found that as the altitude increased, the variability of the amplitudes of all frequencies in the spectrum decreased, and a tendency to a non-zero, almost constant function appeared. In addition, secondary maxima (external sound emitters) could distort the analysis. It was also found that the shape of the spectrum was similar to the Gaussian curve. It was decided that the spectra should be simplified by subtracting their common part and similarly for spectra at all altitudes. This process is shown in Figure 5a-c. The first graph (Figure 5a) shows the original spectra measured at different altitudes, the second graph (Figure 5b) shows the spectra after subtracting their common part, and the third graph (Figure 5c) shows the common part of all spectra called the "spectral background".

The example refers to a 5-minute period on 7 October 2017. This is an illustration of the spectrum development method. Only the filtered spectra were used for further study. In addition, in order to slightly reduce the amount of data and adjust the frequency of air volume measurements, the spectrum of interest was averaged to one hour. However, SODAR measures the data at 10-minute intervals.

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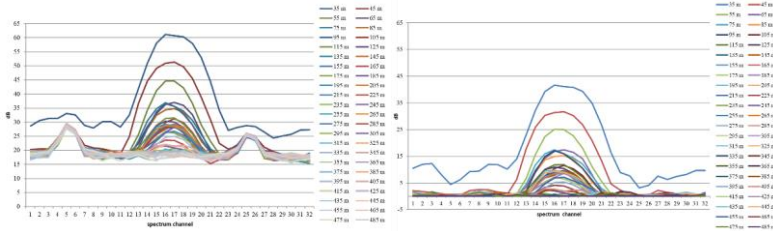
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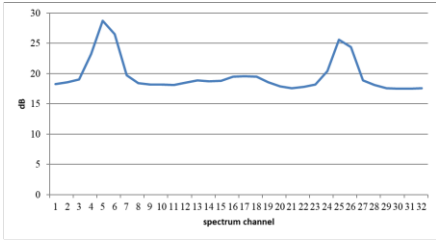
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Figure 5. Example of FILTERING THE SODAR spectrum on 32 channels: a) original spectrum; b) spectrum with subtracted background; c) context.

3.2.3 Spectral properties of SODAR data

Because of the difficulty in comparing full spectra (a string of 32 values at each height) with each other and with spectra from other periods, each spectrum was characterized by a single number (parameter). Thus arose many functions of real values, the argument of which is height. Any such function will be called the "atmospheric state profile" (ASP). The most commonly observed feature of ASP is a rapid, non-linear decrease in value as the height increases. Attempts were made to determine as many parameters of the spectrum as possible. The numerical characteristics of the spectrum were chosen following a statistical approach without analysing their physical interpretations.

The characteristics with which ASP was determined were as follows:

- A. Mean value of the SODAR reflection spectrum;
- B. Maximum value of the spectra with a beam;
- C. Signal-to-noise ratio (SNR);
- D. Modal value (channel number with maximum high spectrum);
- E. Standard deviation;
- F. Median;
- G. Skewness;
- H. Kurtosis;
- I. Similarity to the Gaussian curve.

Analysing ASP shapes, their similarity to the  $\Phi$  function turned out to be familiar (Eq. 1):

$$\Phi(h) = \frac{a}{h^2 + b} + c(h) \tag{1}$$

The ASP for the parameter C profile was similar to another feature (Eq. 2):

$$\Psi(h) = a \cdot h^c \cdot e^{-b \cdot h} \tag{2}$$

The functions  $\Phi$  and  $\Psi$  were chosen arbitrarily. Parameters a, b and c of Equations (1) and (2) were determined for individual ASP (h – height above ground level using the quadratic mean approximation method). The mean-square approximation method determines the quality of the model's matching with the measurement data in the form of a coefficient of determination (the square of the correlation coefficient). This coefficient for transparency is marked RF (regularity factor) and ranges from 0 (significant irregularity) to 1 (perfect regularity).

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The sample analysis suggested that  $RF = 0.373$  means poor regularity (Figure 6a) and  $RF = 0.956$  means good regularity (Figure 6b). A general feature was that the transformed spectra were close to zero from a certain height. Therefore, the calculations included up to 19 heights (215 m).

Figure 7 shows that the ASP at 18:00 was irregular, meaning that the vertical structure of the atmosphere was deformed and irregular. ASP at 23:00 GMT was almost perfect. This led to an investigation of the relationship between the value of ASP and PM10 concentration. For example, the chart in Figure 7 shows that 24–27 January 2018 is the period during which excessive PM10 concentrations occurred. The regularity factor for the characteristic was compared with the average concentration of PM10 from three automatic NEM stations near the SODAR location (Krasinski Avenue, Bulwarowa and Bujaka Streets). The three stations were selected for analysis because they are located in different areas of spatial development. This allowed approximating the average PM10 concentration for Krakow as they had the most complete series of measurements. For example, only one RF was shown in graphs for clarity, but the other regularity factors were similar. On this basis, it was hypothesized that ASP was disturbed a few hours before the increase in PM10 concentration. The hypothesis was developed based on the analysis of many charts, including Figure 7. This happened so often that it became the inspiration for this work.

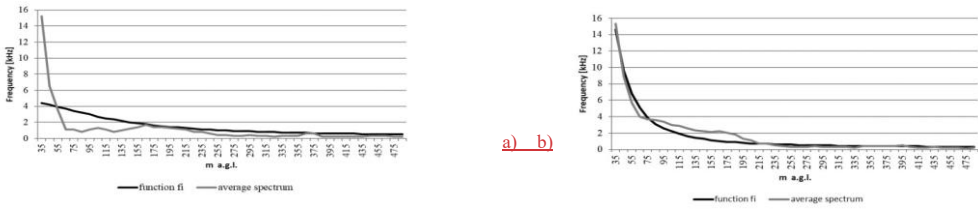


Figure 6. Graph of the regularity coefficient for parameter  $f$  (mean spectrum – spectrum average) compared to the PM10 concentration: a) irregularity to 18:00 UTC; b) good regularity to 23:00 UTC on 26 January 2018.

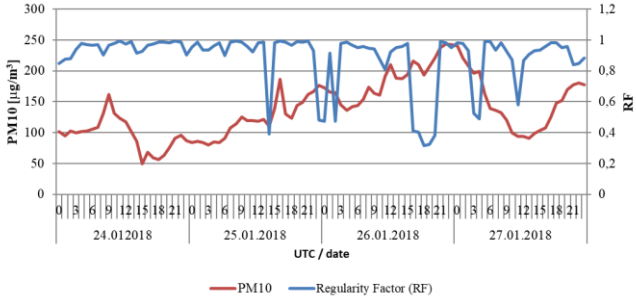


Figure 7. Example of the regularity factor (RF) for characterization (mean spectrum or spectrum average) between the SODAR data height of 35–205 m a.g.l. and PM10 concentration.

For a complete description of the state of the atmosphere, it was decided that the meteorological RF wind characteristics should be added to the regularity coefficients A to I:

- J. Horizontal wind speed (averaged in ASP);
- K. Vertical wind speed (difference: min-max);
- L. Wind direction (dispersion of direction around the average vector of this wind direction);
- M. Temperature measured with SODAR at 2 m a.s.l.

#### 4 PM10 forecast models

This article proposes four methods of forecasting PM10 concentration in Krakow. Three use SODAR data, and the fourth is a reference method for a forecast when only pollution data are available. The forecast is for the 12-hour time horizon, and the forecasting methods are based on SODAR and pollution data for the October–March winter seasons of 2017–2019. Reference data from 1 October 2021 to 28 February 2022 were used to compare the methods. Each method was employed to calculate the forecast every hour, and the results were compared with the actual (mathematical statistics: IEA, MAPE, MSE, Theil's UII coefficient) measurements of PM10 concentrations. Thanks to this, a quantitative assessment of each method was made, and a correlation coefficient was derived for the relationship between PM10 measurement and short-term PM10 forecast. Four methods for predicting PM10 concentrations have been developed, with descriptions and application systems of the methods explained below (Figure 8).

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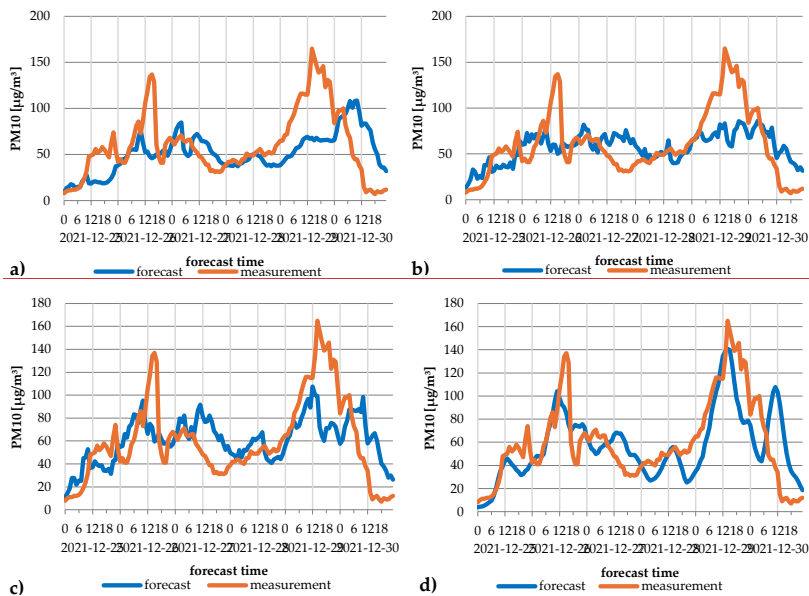


Figure 10. Measurements and forecasts for 25–30 December 2021; a) forecast without SODAR data; b) forecast predicted by regression without hours; c) full regression forecast; d) search method forecast.

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 Figure 9 Measurements and forecasts for the period from 12 to 16 December 2021: (a) forecast without SODAR data; (b) ¶  
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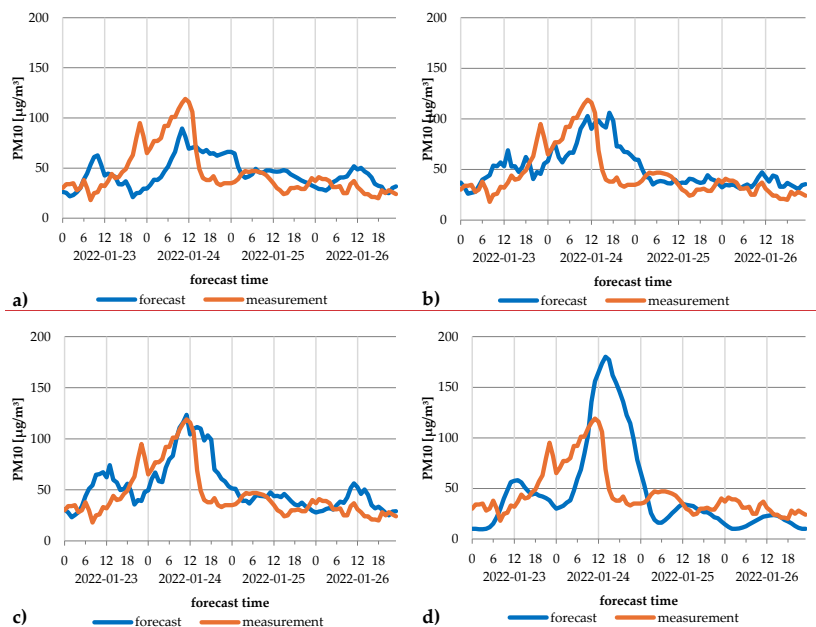
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**Figure 11.** Measurements and forecasts for 23–26 January 2022: a) forecast without SODAR data; b) forecast predicted by regression without hours; c) full regression forecast; d) search method forecast.

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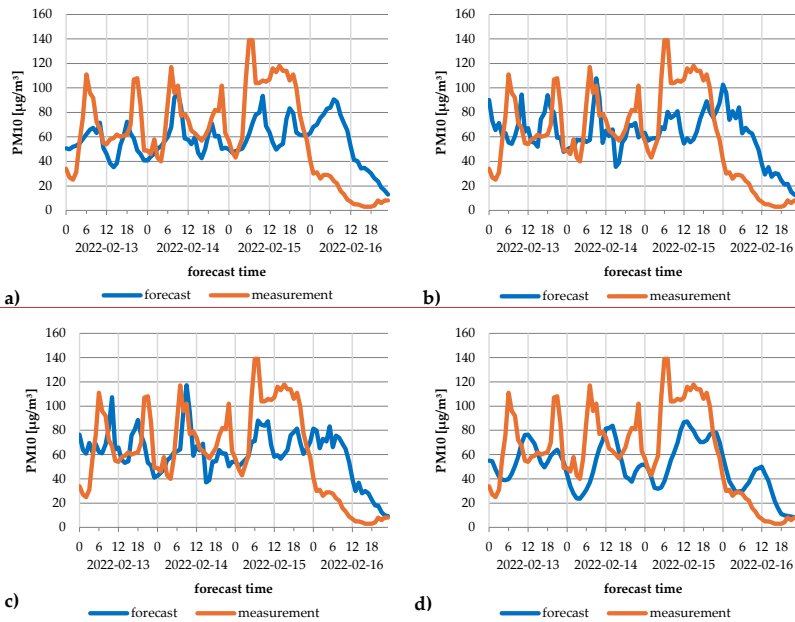
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**Figure 12.** Measurements and forecasts for 13–16 February 2022: a) forecast without SODAR data; b) forecast predicted by regression without hours; c) full regression forecast; d) search method forecast.

The above trends in PM10 predictions compared to measurements during PM10 episodes  $> 100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (Figures 9 to 12) revealed that each prediction method underestimated the measured maximum PM10 concentration. It should also be noted that the discrepancy between predictions and measurements changed with episodes. It can be concluded that the meteorological origin of each episode was different, which made forecasting difficult. Despite these discrepancies, it was found that each forecasting method provided a trend result that mimicked the measurements, sometimes with a delay of several hours. The methods fit well under certain circumstances. This was the case, for example, for the forecast (d) for the section 12–16 December 2021 (Figure 9d), forecast (d) for the section 25–30 December 2021 (Figure 10d) and the forecast (c) for the section from 23–26 January 2022 (Figure 11c).

**Table 4.** Basic statistical characteristics of the differences between PM10 projections and measurements for 100 PM10 episodes  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  from October 2021 to March 2022.

Statistical Parameters (# formula)	Measurement versus					
	Average Option 0	No SODAR Method (3)	Full Regression Method (4)	Regression No hours Method (5)	Search on Geometric Mean Method (6)	Median search
MAE (11)	33.35	26.61	23.46	22.95	24.16	23.89
MAPE (12)	74.1	70.7	62.9	60.8	60.4	61.6

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MSE (13)	2207	1343	1013	1010	1141	1113
UII (14)	0.397	0.242	0.182	0.182	0.205	0.2
CORR	0	0.475	0.62	0.627	0.599	0.593

The aggregated characterization of the forecast error statistics for episodes (Table 4) revealed that, as with the entire data population, each forecasting method produced better results than the average values, meaning the predictions were useful. As for the statistical parameters studied, the fifth method – regression without hours (with the lowest MAE, UII and MSE and the highest CORR) was the best fit. However, this does not mean this method is universal or suitable for every episode, as shown above.

### 5 Conclusions

The use of PM10 forecasts for short-term improvement of air quality is becoming more and more frequent in Poland (three-day forecasts and forecasts of the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, available online: <http://powietrze.gios.gov.pl/pjp/airPollution>). However, air quality forecasting is rarely used to guide administrative and economic decision-making (e.g. providing free public transport). This is because inaccurate forecasts cause high social costs (dissatisfaction of residents) or unjustified financial costs (lack of revenue from public transport tickets). Therefore, applying air quality models to these forecasts must ensure as little loss as possible due to poor decision-making.

The research discussed here shows that using SODAR data to support an air quality forecasting system is reasonable. In particular, the following proposals were made:

- The SODAR model can be complementary to other forecasting methods, as it is highly useful due to its simplicity and speed of calculations.
- The SODAR model does not require emission data, for which temporal and spatial variability are difficult to verify quickly.
- Table 4 shows that, especially at high concentrations, SODAR data provide significant information relative to the model (3) without SODAR.
- The use of simple formulas for regression models in forecasting, while maintaining their multivariance (taking into account the four forecast options), facilitates the optimization of the predictive process.
- The model is ready for use, but work is underway to improve it through a different selection of SODAR parameters.

Applying the model proposed in this article may improve short-term air quality predictions, although the model still requires further testing, especially for episodes of high PM10 concentrations.

**Author Contributions:** idea and conception, E.K. and L.O.; methodology, E.K.; software, M.W.; validation, M.W. and E.K.; formal analysis, L.O.; investigation, L.O.; resources, E.K.; data curation, E.K.; writing – original draft preparation, L.O.; writing – review and editing, E.K.; visualization, E.K.; supervision, M.W.; project administration, L.O.; funding acquisition, L.O. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** The meteorological data used in this paper (the wind roses) are available to the public: <https://danepubliczne.imgw.pl/> (accessed July 2022). The air quality data used in this paper are available to the public: <https://powietrze.gios.gov.pl/pjp/archives/> (accessed July 2022). The owner of Sodar is the Krakow City Hall, but it is lent to IMWM-PIB. The measurement results are not made publicly available because they constitute raw data and are prepared periodically after validation.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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