

PORTUGAL'S TOURISM REVENUE REGISTERED ITS STRONGEST GROWTH OF THE LAST 20 YEARS



Last April, Portugal recorded the biggest increase in spending by foreign tourists since 1997, surpassing for the first time ever the major impacts caused by Expo 98 and the European Football Championship in 2004. The Portugal's tourism revenue generated by the locals follow the same trend recording 2nd biggest increase since 1997.

An increase compared to last year was somehow already predictable, as this year's April included the Easter festivities, a holiday that in 2016 took place in March - nevertheless, its proportion did beat the initial expectations.

As a matter of fact, according to Banco de Portugal, **the tourism revenue reached 1,250 million euros in April**, something that represents an increase of 38.6%, or 348 million, when compared to the previous year.

One needs to go back to June 2004 in order to find another monthly variation above the 30% threshold, and that was the month when the European Football Championship, held in Portugal, started to roll, having had an increase of 32.5%.

This becomes even more relevant if we take into account that the third best variation overall since 1997 was the one registered in July 1998, with 28.5%, the year when Portugal welcomed the World's Fair.

The data revealing Portugal's tourism revenue also show that the evolution registered in April prompted a growth surge in the year's first four months, of 20.7%, an increase of almost 600 million euros - April is accountable for more than half of that figure, a month that, with its increase of 348 million euros, also reached its biggest growth in the last 20 years, surpassing the previous best mark, which was an increase of 186 million euros in September 2014.

But the money spent by foreign tourists in Portugal is not the only surprising element in this unexpected month of April, as the Portuguese have also spent like never before abroad even exceeding the foreseeable growth that took into consideration the Easter effect.

The data provided by the central bank indicate that the Portuguese have spent 410 million euros abroad, an increase of 25% or 81.97 million euros.

This relative increase is the second strongest of the last 20 years, losing only to the +25.8% increase in April 2004, a month in which the Portuguese probably anticipated their summer holidays, in order to be on home soil during the European Football Championship.

Looking at the year's first four months, the tourism revenue of the Portuguese reached 1,352 million euros, an increase of 14.1% or 167 million.

This upsurge in expenditure, however, did not prevent Portugal from having in April the largest

increase, in the last two decades, in the surplus of its tourism trade balance, with more than 266 million euros.

The relative increase of 46.6%, nonetheless, is only the 3rd biggest of the last 20 years, falling short of the +54% increase registered in June 2004, the year of the European Football Championship, and the +50% growth in September 1998, the year when Portugal held the World's Fair in Lisbon.

With such an increase being registered in April, the year's first four months has now reached a growth of 25.3% or 425.94 million euros, and now the country, for the first time ever, surpasses the threshold of 2,000 million euros net in Portugal's tourism revenue, amassed throughout a period that is regarded, for the most part, as low season.

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