

SWISS HOTELS FACE A DROP IN OVERNIGHT STAYS



After a temporary boom a dark cloud is sweeping over the Swiss tourism again. The number of hotel overnight stays dropped by 1.4 percent to 2.72 million in January, contrary to the previous year. According to the most recent accommodation statistics of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO), the number of overnight stays decreased by 30,000 as compared to January 2012.

The Swiss guest houses received fewer domestic guests and also fewer visitors from foreign countries. Domestic travelers generated 1.3 million overnight stays, 0.6 percent less than in the previous year. **The decrease of guests from foreign countries amounted to 2.1 percent.**

The tourism industry had previously indicated an uptrend for the end of the previous year. The number of overnight stays rose from October until December by annual comparison. Overall, the Swiss hotel industry branch achieved 34.8 million overnight stays in 2012, however, that is the weakest outcome since 2005.

The large winter sports regions recorded fewer overnight stays at the beginning of the current year. The Bernese Oberland suffered the most notable decrease with a minus of 5.3 percent. The number of overnight stays also went back in the cantons Graubünden (-1.2 percent) as well as in Wallis (-2.1 percent).

The losses in the three strong tourism regions however dropped significantly less than in January of the previous year. Back then, the decrease in overnight stays amounted to 7-10 percent.

The hotel industry received significantly fewer German guests - by far most important source country. The number of overnight stays of tourists from the northern neighboring country dropped by 6.8 percent to approximately 370,000. The FSO also shows significant declines for guests from the Netherlands (-14.8 percent) as well as from China (-26.8).

The Swiss tourism branch has been complaining for a long time about a decrease in guests from foreign countries due to the continuing strong Swiss Frank. Especially the demand from the Euro area is affected by the currency situation. In January, the number of guests from Europe decreased by 2.3 percent again.

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