

A STRONG SUMMER START CAN BE SEEN FOR AUSTRIA TOURISM, ... DESPITE OF NEGATIVE FIGURES



The late Easter of 2014 (Easter Sunday was on April 20th) haven't had as much influence on Austria's tourism in May as was expected. That is what the recently published numbers regarding the month May by the Austrian Statistics Bureau show. For both pre-season months, May and June, together, a new record high is expected.

Because some holidays moved into June, May had to expect a strong decline in both Arrivals and stays. Easter holidays that were late or even later, have last occurred in 2011, 2003 (also on April 20th) and in 2000. Back then, May saw declines of 11,3% (2011), 8,8% (2003) and 14% (2000). This year, the decline in May „only“ reached 6,9%.

While the classic tourism area's Tirol and Vorarlberg (each -16,2%), as well as Salzburg (-13%) and Kärnten (-10,6%) showed declines in the double figures, the decline in Burgenland (-4,1%) and Ober-Österreich (-2,3%) were much more moderate. Steiermark kept its ground with -0,2% and Nieder-Österreich (+ 2,6%) and Wien (+ 2,9%) could even increase. Wien was, for the first time, the province with the highest number of overnight stays (1.278 million), just ahead of Tirol, with 1,265 million.

Decisive for the progress of the pre-season is watching May and June together, as the holidays in spring switch between those two months and cause big fluctuations in the number of tourists. A relatively weak plus of 6,7% in June (with late Easter holidays, it was traditionally higher, it reached 16% in 2011, 9,2% in 2003) would already cause a record and bring more than 16 million overnight stays in May and June for the second time since 2012. At the end of August, we will know more about that. Based on the numbers we are seeing so far, nothing is preventing that.

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