

EUROPEAN CITIES ARE GROWING IN POPULARITY AMONG TOURISTS



Short city visits are becoming more and more of popular in Europe. Between 2005 and 2015, the general tourism industry grew by 14 percent, with an increase in city tourism of 38 percent. Simultaneously, according to a recent study by Roland Berger called "European City Tourism 2015", which closely examined 45 large European cities, the continent's economy only grew by 5 percent.

"Our research confirms the sustaining boom in tourism," emphasized Vladimir Preveden, an affiliate of Roland Berger. "This shows that city tourism is a crucial factor for Europe's economic development."

The study separates all European cities included in three cluster groups with various criteria. This includes factors such as the number of overnight stays per visitor and the relevance as a congress city.

The first cluster groups together large cities **with more than 10 million overnight stays per year: Istanbul, Amsterdam and Paris lead the top followed by German cities such as Berlin (24 million overnight stays), Munich (13,4 million) and Hamburg (12 million).**

Istanbul particularly surprised with a strong growth in overnight stays and bed capacities, while cities such as Paris, Amsterdam and Prague raise concerns: "The tourism density in these areas of high population density is extremely high," explained Preveden. The ratio of overnight stays to general population is out of balance, which could lead to tensions between tourism development and quality of living in the future.

The second cluster pools cities with 2 to 10 million overnight stays per year. Brussels is at the top of this list, mainly due to its relevancy as a congress city and the optimal accessibility via airplane. Copenhagen and Zurich can be found on places two and three respectively.

Cluster number three with European cities, which record less than 2 million overnight stays per year, is led by Dubrovnik, Luxemburg and Lausanne. In this group, Dubrovnik is displaying the largest growth in overnight stays.

According to the study authors, Dubrovnik has reached its limits in the ratio of tourism growth to city size. Furthermore, the Adriatic harbor is greatly burdened by the high influx in cruises.

Istanbul is the surprise winner of cluster one. The city at the Bosphorus combines modern European standards and Asian flair with a high level of accessibility and a favorable climate. "It's remarkable that Istanbul leads in the categories of overnight stays and bed capacities," says Preveden. Simultaneously, its tourism density is very low. This shows that there's still a lot of room for growth in the coming years.

London (57 million overnight stays) and Paris (36 million) have a significant lead in overnight stays in the first cluster. However, when compared to other tourism centers these European cities have the lowest overall growth. With an obvious distance, they are followed by Rome

(25,4 million overnight stays) and Berlin (24 million). Even though the German capital displays the most dynamic growth after Istanbul, it is only ranked at seventh place. Sadly, Berlin's relatively bad accessibility via airplane denies the city a better ranking in the comparison of European cities.

Date: 2015-12-14

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/european-cities-welcomed-38-percent-more-tourists-news4829>