

TOURISM IN PARIS EXPECTED MORE FROM EURO 2016



Tourism in Paris, does not usually need the Euro championship to attract visitors. However, after the terrible attacks of 2015, the spring strikes as well as the unpleasant weather of recent weeks, the French capital was waiting for the big football event with high hopes.

The Parc des Princes, which was entirely renovated for the occasion, and the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, are sold out during every match. The fans area of Champ de Mars, at the foot of the Eiffel Tower is also packed during the matches.

Between 45,000 and 50,000 people were rushing there last Friday to watch the first match between France and Romania on giant screens. This is a great figure, according to Jean-François Martins, assistant to the mayor, who is in charge of sports and tourism in Paris.

In the context of high terrorist threat, all football fans had to undergo multiple security checks. Still, the City of Paris forecasted up to 90,000 people coming for Euro 2016 to the capital.

“The café and restaurant owners already note increased amount of guests,” said Jean-François Martins. “Only hoteliers are clearly disappointed.”

Didier Chenet, president of the group GNI, said that the hotel occupation in the city is 20% lower than it was last year in June. “Hoteliers who had not lowered their prices have begun to do so. It seems that people are afraid to stay in Paris hotels.”

The revenue per available room (RevPAR) decreased in Paris by 19.4% on the first three days of Euro 2016 as compared to the same period last year.

Last week, a new terrorist act in Magnanville did not improve the situation for tourism in Paris at all. Larossi Abballa, who killed several police officers, announced in a video that there will be lots of dead people at the football competition.

A study by the Law Centre and Sports Economy Limoges estimated that **Paris could expect 161 million euros of local economic impact during the football event.** The major part of that should come from the revenues from the stadiums and fan areas expected to amount to 141 million euros. It is too early to know however whether these forecasts will be achieved.

Tourism in Paris and the mayor Anne Hidalgo hope for a longer-term impact. The high media exposure of Euro 2016, which captivates hundreds of millions of viewers around the world, still projects images of a “joyful and festive atmosphere” that prevails.

“This might attract foreigners to come to the city of light,” said Jean-François Martins.

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