

CRUISE TOURISM IN EUROPE HAD A SUCCESSFUL YEAR



Cruise tourism in Europe is expected to be on rise in the coming years despite global economic austerity measures, according to Pierfrancesco Vago, Chairman of CLIA Europe and Executive Chairman of MSC Cruises.

Since 2008 European cruise tourism has grown by 49%. This sector continues to expand year by year. **In 2015, a total of 6.6 million Europeans went on a cruise. This represents an increase of 3% compared to the year before.**

Germany and Great Britain each accounted for more than 27% of European passengers. These are followed by Italy with 12.3%, France with 9.3% and Spain with around 7%. The remaining 19% are distributed among passengers from the rest of Europe. European cruises account for a total of 28.4% of the world's total cruise traffic. In 2015, there were 23.19 million cruises around the world.

Cruise Tourism in Europe Ready to Expand

With an economic contribution of 41 billion euros in 2015, the cruise industry is a driving force for local economies in Europe. It represents an increase of 2% compared to the previous year. The direct expenses of the cruise tourism in Europe amounted to 16.89 billion euros.

The sector employed more than 360,000 people in 2015, either directly in the cruise sector or in related business areas. The figure is 11,000 higher than in 2014. These figures show that cruises have become an important player, as they create jobs along the entire supply chain.

"Cruises are an indispensable part of our lives and will inspire even more Europeans and generate even more economic growth in the future," says Pierfrancesco Vago.

"While the cruise industry is ready for further expansion in Europe, we face a series of common challenges that we need to tackle to ensure that cruise tourism remains on the right track. We are aware of this."

Securing Growth in the Future

In order to ensure the growth of the industry in the future, CLIA Europe is working actively with regional policy-makers. Together, a business-friendly environment is to be secured and the current EU Visa Code revised so that more foreign tourists will be motivated to visit Europe.

Cruise tourism in Europe also needs a more uniform application of EU environmental laws and port reform across the continent. This will prevent operational hurdles in European waters. CLIA Europe is in close contact with local authorities to demonstrate the long-term economic benefits of the cruise industry and its partners, which goes far beyond pure tourism.

Cruise tourism has also made progress in terms of safety this year. Cruise ships are so flexible that they can change their timetables at any time and in short term avoid certain ports and destinations. **In this way the shipping companies maximize the safety of the passengers and crew.**

Shipping companies also work closely with safety experts and authorities to assess the current risks.

The ability to continue with the growth in Europe will also depend on security. This is why CLIA members, shipping companies and other stakeholders are reinforcing the security measures in all affected European regions, particularly in the popular Mediterranean region.

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