

CONGRESS TOURISM IN PRAGUE BRINGS BILLIONS TO THE BUDGET



Congress tourism in the Czech capital Prague generates revenues of 4.4-5.2 billion Czech crowns (EUR 173-204 million) per year. It is estimated that only 3.9% of this sum returns to the budget of the city - 170 - 200 million Czech crowns.

In 2016, Prague's tourism performance generated about 33 to 45 billion crowns (EUR 1.3-1.77 billion). This is approximately one third of the whole country's performance. **At the same time, it also accounts for 6% of the city's economic activity.** Thus said, tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in Prague. Congress tourism accounts for 1.1% of the capital's GDP, while tourism as a whole 15%.

Congress Tourism Extremely Beneficial

Compared to leisure tourism, congress tourism is much more beneficial in terms of the expenditure of foreigners. A foreign congress participant spends on average 5670 crowns (EUR 220) in the Czech capital. This is four to five times more than the casual visitor. All in all, revenues from congress tourism, including local participants, amount to up to 26 billion crowns (about 1 billion EUR).

"Congress tourism isn't just billions in state coffers, but also specific working opportunities. In Prague this is about 5470 full-time jobs. This accounts to 5.5% of all employment in the tourism industry in the capital," says Ondrej Spacek, an expert on tourism.

Space for More Growth

Congress tourism in the Czech metropolis also has space for more growth. In 2016, according to the Czech Statistical Office, there was the highest number of events in the last ten years. "Prague has a lot to offer to event organizers," says Roman Muska, director of the Prague Convention Bureau.

"Besides its history it is mainly easy access to the city and its capacity. It is possible to travel to Prague by direct flights from 162 destinations worldwide. There are also 795 hotels offering almost 92 thousand beds. According to a statistical census of congress and incentive tourism of the Ministry for Regional Development in 2012, Prague offers 243 conference rooms with a total capacity of over 169 thousand people," he added.

The popularity of Prague is confirmed by statistics from the International Congress Association ICCA. **Prague is ranked 10th in the association's yearly ranking of worldwide congress destinations.** According to figures of the Prague Convention Bureau, British, German and American delegates participate in Prague-based congresses the most. The most discussed topics are pharmacy and healthcare, industry and finally IT and telecommunication.

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