

# TOURISM IN TUNISIA IS FINALLY RECOVERING



Tunisian tourism recorded a "real recovery" during the first five months of 2018 with a 32% growth in revenues and a significant development of the Russian and Chinese markets, according to the Minister of Tourism in Tunisia.

"There is a significant improvement. Growth is picking up in tourism. We have exceeded the figures of 2014 and we exceed the figures of 2010 (+6%), the reference year for tourism in Tunisia," said the minister, Selma Elloumi Rekik.

**The number of visitors exceeded 2.3 million on May 20, up 21.8% from the same period in 2017 and 5.7% from the same period in 2010.**

Tourism-related revenues reached \$358.6 million in the first five months of 2018, an increase of 31.8 per cent over the same period in 2017.

"This is the year of real recovery," Elloumi said, adding that for the summer season, "all hotels in Djerba, Hammamet, Sousse and Mahdia, the country's main tourist destinations, are full.

This recovery concerned the "traditional market": The French (+45 %), the Germans (+42,4 %) and the Algerians (+17,4 %), the Minister stated. But the Chinese and Russians are in the lead with rates of +56.9% and +46.4% respectively.

"In 2018, tourism in Tunisia will exceed 8 million arrivals with growth in the Russian and Chinese markets as well as the traditional market," Elloumi predicted.

"People come back to Tunisia because there is security (...) We are as safe as any European city," she assures.

**The recovery has been supported by the return of major tour operators such as British tour operator Thomas Cook and giant TUI France**, which had ceased operations in Tunisia after the 2015 attacks, Elloumi noted.

After several years of deterioration due to the instability that followed the revolution in 2011, tourism in Tunisia was seriously affected after the attacks of 2015 against the Bardo Museum in Tunis and a hotel in Sousse, which had caused 60 deaths including 59 foreign tourists.

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