

PARIS PLANS TO LIMIT SEASONAL RENTALS IN TOURISTIC AREAS



The most popular areas would be the most concerned: typically, the center of Paris, the Marais and Montmartre, which are facing a housing shortage.

A quota of tourist accommodation available may be limited by street or by neighborhood. This is a possibility, seriously considered by the Paris City Council. In order to favor the housing of Parisians, Ian Brossat, deputy for housing, wants to study the feasibility of this measure, **which could go as far as a ban "in the tense touristic areas" of the capital. Its implementation would be "in conjunction with the State"**.

Presented to the Paris Council, the idea was put forward by 26 citizens drawn by lot, consulted between January and February. This "citizen opinion" is inspired by the example of Barcelona. There, the exasperation of residents against tourists has led the city to drastically limit the expansion of tourist accommodation, rented through Airbnb, Booking, Tripadvisor or HomeAway.

"The idea is to launch a study, to see what such a system could look like in Paris and how useful it would be, says Ian Brossat. If it proves relevant, it will require a legislative change."

The elected official already sees "a small window" with the 4D law, which should pass in the summer. As part of this decentralization bill, Anne Hidalgo's team would like the legislator to "authorize the municipalities wishing to have the possibility of adapting the regulation of furnished tourist accommodation to local specificities".

If it were to succeed, the Parisian executive would thus consider "subjecting all tourist rentals of accommodation to authorization", instead of the current declarative system.

Despite the halt in world travel due to Covid-19, Paris is a prime location for seasonal rentals. It is the leading city in the world for Airbnb, which has been in conflict with the Paris City Council for years.

Last year, Paris saw a sharp drop in the number of Airbnb rentals, while the rest of the country saw a steady increase in bookings. Between Feb 2020 and Feb 2021, France was the country that has seen the largest increase in the number of bookings. France is the country with the highest increase in the number of active units in almost all regions, especially around the Loire Valley and in the north with Brittany where small towns and seaside resorts continued to grow.

However, bookings fell 3.2% in Paris and the number of total bookings fell 23%. For Paris, this reflects a growing desire to escape the capital whenever a new lockdown is pronounced.

Worldwide, Airbnb rental service has remained surprisingly robust despite covid-19. From January to June 2021, Airbnb lost 5% of its total bookings, but the service has since recouped that loss and increased its bookings by 2.5% from pre-pandemic levels.

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