

# RIVER CRUISES: TOURISM ON THE DANUBE IN CRISIS



The University of Passau institute CENTOURIS, sustainable market changes are foreseeable with regard to travel behavior. Above all, shipping companies and tour operators are threatened by the crisis.

In the context of Danube river cruises, guides are often active, offering information and entertainment to their guests on trips and guided tours. **They are also affected by the Corona measures.**

"A gap could not be closed in a hurry. The high quality of the guided tours is based on the many years of experience and very extensive training of the guides," says Brigitte Franz, project manager at CENTOURIS. Despite everything, the crisis is also seen as an opportunity: those surveyed assume that guests will demand targeted excursions away from the tourist highlights. In any case, insider tips are in vogue.

## **Existence-threatening Loss of Sales**

The university cites worrying figures. For example, the loss of sales in the river cruise industry on the river side would be 88%, on the land side even 92%.

Nevertheless, the business expectations of the companies do not look quite so bleak. 70% of respondents expect bookings to rise in 2022, but a third also expect cancellations at the same time.

Brigitte Franz sums it up: "**The mood within the industry is clearly tense, stakeholders feel uncertain and are understandably annoyed by the current situation.** Nevertheless, they are still confident and remain calm."

## **Permanent Changes**

Especially in the area of hygiene measures that continue to be required and upcoming changes, good communication between those involved on land and those on the river is necessary.

"Structures urgently need to be created to cope with the increasing complexity and to integrate the new requirements into the respective processes as quickly as possible," says Brigitte Franz.

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