

# THE EIFFEL TOWER'S ATTENDANCE ONLY A QUARTER OF THE NORMAL



According to the operating company's forecasts, Eiffel Tower will welcome a total of 1.5 million visitors this year, compared to 6.2 million in 2019.

The Eiffel Tower, put in financial difficulty by the health crisis, has returned in October to pre-Covid levels of attendance and resumed its painting project, which must be completed for the 2024 Olympic Games.

**The Iron Lady, which reopened in July after nearly nine months of closure, has experienced "a beautiful month of October" thanks to a "real return of tourism"** in the capital, the operating company of the Eiffel Tower (Sete) noted.

The introduction of the health pass in the middle of the summer did not slow down this upturn. The Tower, which offered antigenic tests for its visitors who did not have the precious QR code, stopped them after having carried out 14,000 of them since July 21. The Eiffel Tower's attendance in the summer was 13,000 visitors per day, compared to 25,000 in the pre-Covid era, which is the target, taking into account a 50% capacity in the lifts.

From 14,000 on weekend days in September, the number of visitors rose to more than 20,000 in October, which is "better than in 2019 on weekends", indicates the Sete which observes a "return of the nearby Europeans" and Americans, the latter now constituting 10% of the clientele. But with 1.5 million visitors anticipated for 2021 against 6.2 million in 2019, this gradual recovery "will not cover the losses accumulated" with the crisis, according to the same source.

Among the most visited paying monuments in the world, this symbol of France had to close from mid-March to the end of June 2020, when the first lockdown took place, then again from the end of October 2020 to mid-July 2021. **As a result, the Sete is forecasting losses of 75 million euros for the current year, after an initial deficit of 52 million for 2020.**

The object of a loan guaranteed by the State - 25 million euros - and a recapitalization of its main shareholder, the city of Paris, of nearly 60 million euros, the operator has made several requests for assistance, especially from the State. "Discussions are underway". Suspended since the beginning of February because of traces of lead above the regulatory threshold, the painting work in progress resumed on 11 October with a new protocol, the Sete also indicates.

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