

CITY TOURISM IN AUSTRIA ON THE WAY TO PRE-PANDEMIC FIGURES



The corona pandemic hit city tourism in Austria particularly hard. Slowly but surely, however, it is approaching the pre-pandemic levels again. Austria's provincial capitals and the federal capital Vienna recorded more than 20 million overnight stays in 2022. They thus grew twice as much as the rest of Austria in the previous year, as ARGE Städtetourismus reported. However, the share of nationwide revenue is still lower than in 2019.

The previous year was initially still characterized by a lockdown, but the course of the year was marked by a dynamic recovery. Together, the nine cities achieved 20.3 million overnight stays. **This is an increase of 126% compared to the previous year and corresponds to 78% of the number of overnight stays in 2019.** Austria without the capital cities achieved an increase of 65% in the previous year, ARGE calculated.

Almost two-thirds (65.2%) of overnight stays in the member cities were generated in Vienna in 2022. The share of city tourism of the provincial capitals and Vienna in total overnight stays in Austria was 14.8% in the previous year. This is still below the usual values: in 2019, the share was 17%.

"2022 showed what we had always emphasized throughout the pandemic: city tourism is finding its way back into its long-standing role as a driver of value creation, innovation and a guarantor of year-round jobs," Vienna's tourism director Norbert Kettner expressed his conviction in his function as chairman of ARGE cities: "If the cities' race to catch up continues, by 2023 the ratio will again be as we know it from the pre-pandemic times. Around one-fifth of tourism demand in Austria is served in urban destinations."

Even before the pandemic, city tourism had been a growth engine in Austrian tourism. **From 2000 to 2019, overnight stays in the nine cities had more than doubled with an increase of 108%,** according to the ARGE chairman, and across Austria, overnight stays rose by 34% in this period.

There is hardly a segment in Austria's tourism that focuses more on international visitors than city destinations. Experts point out that congresses, corporate meetings and business trips are considered revenue and growth drivers. The so-called spillover effects would benefit not only the economy in the cities but also the entire country, for example, through supplier companies.

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