

# GERMANS' TRAVEL MOOD IS A CHALLENGE FOR AIRPORTS



It's the summer travel season. While airports seem ready for the rush after the issues of 2020, hotels and restaurants are worried about the need for more skilled employees. Even with high inflation and rising prices, German travelers are still excited about their vacations. Tour operators see a surge in demand, with some increasing capacity. However, airports are still facing a challenge after the chaos of last summer. Despite this, the industry is

optimistic that things will be better in 2020.

## **Travel is more expensive on average**

Travel prices in Germany have increased, primarily due to the rise in energy costs. As a result, airfare prices for tour operator trips have increased, and hotels have also seen an increase in food prices. However, the extent of the price increase varies depending on the location and hotel. A recent Check24 study found that Sardinia is slightly cheaper this year compared to the summer of 2022. Nevertheless, on average, travelers who booked a package deal comprising flight and hotel for the top 30 destinations paid approximately eight percent more by the end of May 2022 than they did for the same period in 2022.

## **No great last-minute bargains**

Because of high demand and well-utilized capacities, the big last-minute bargains for the summer of 2023 are unlikely. There will also be trips for last-minute travelers this year. However, due to still somewhat lower capacities compared to pre-Corona, the selection will not be as extensive as we've seen in the past.

## **Challenge for airports**

Airport and travel industry representatives are confident that last year's flight chaos will not be repeated this summer. However, Frankfurt Airport operator Fraport acknowledges that the situation remains challenging. They are cautiously optimistic that they can ensure stable operations at FRA with regular vacation season waiting times in phases. Last year, staff shortages at airlines and airports caused long waiting times for check-in and baggage problems.

The German Airports Association (ADV) has reported improved airport processes and increased staff recruitment. ADV CEO Ralph Beisel says the recent Easter vacations were a successful initial test. Still, the true performance of the processes will be seen during the summer months when terminals, aprons, and airspace are subjected to maximum loads. The 2023 travel season is predicted to be even better, but peak periods may still be challenging depending on the airport and process point.

"The average booking situation in German vacation regions is already good," says Norbert Kunz, chief executive of the German Tourism Association (DTV). In April, the number of guests from Germany and abroad overnight stays was only 0.2 percent below the pre-Corona level. The number of foreign guests is also on the rise again. In this respect, German tourism is looking forward to the summer season with confidence.

## **Shortage of skilled workers causes concern**

This year, the shortage of skilled workers remains a pressing concern for German hotels and restaurants. They urgently need hotel and kitchen staff, as well as cleaners. Service staff are essential during peak seasons, and their absence may result in reduced operating hours and limited menu options.

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