

NO WAVE OF CANCELLATIONS IN PARIS, SAYS THE GOVERNMENT



The French government is trying to reassure the public that the riots will not lead to a "wave of cancellations" in Paris, according to Olivia Grégoire, the tourism minister. "We must remain calm," she said. "We don't have a wave of cancellations in Paris. I've been in touch with all the platforms for the last few days. We're seeing a fluctuation of -0.5, -2%, but that doesn't mean we can draw any conclusions," the minister said at the start of the summer tourist season and a year before the Olympic Games in the French capital.

The minister still hoped it would be an "exceptional" year for the sector. Violent nightly riots, broadcast worldwide, broke out in several French cities, particularly in Paris and its suburbs, on June 27, following the death of Nahel, a 17-year-old teenager shot at point-blank range by a policeman. For the last two nights, a lull seems to be taking shape.

The destination image damage

According to Jean-François Rial, director of the Paris Tourist Office, the situation is more critical. "We have already had thousands of cancellations. At the beginning of July, I think we're already looking at 20-25% cancellations in Paris among international clients. I wouldn't be surprised if the figures were the same for the whole of France.

Since the start of the year, our Paris location has experienced a 25% rise in American customers. This has made up for the lack of Chinese and Russian customers. High-end markets have strong presence. It's worth noting that Japanese, Chinese, American, and South American customers are known to be especially concerned about security while traveling.

Meanwhile, the influential GNC employers' association (the National Group of Hotel Chains) recorded a 2% to 5% drop in the first ten days of July.

Hospitality sector establishments affected by the recent violent crises in France have suffered moral and material damage. However, it is expected that the summer of 2023 will still see good activity unless there is a reversal in the internal security situation. These crises include the Gilets Jaunes revolt and protests against pension reform, which have occurred since 2018.

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