

DUBROVNIK PLANS TO LIMIT VACATION RENTALS



Croatia's tourism industry is rebounding from its record-breaking 2019 performance. As stated by Nikolina Brnjac, Croatia's Minister of Tourism and Sport, the authorities are now focusing on promoting "balanced regional tourism" across the country. Dubrovnik, a stunning old town listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, plans to regulate vacation rentals.

Reversing the Demographic Curve

Dubrovnik, a city affected by overtourism, has taken measures to regulate cruises by launching the "Respect the City" campaign. The city council is expected to pass a bylaw in April that will regulate seasonal vacation rentals by banning new rental permits in and around the Old City, which aligns with specific UNESCO rules. The mayor, Mato Frankovic, has stated that **this move is necessary to protect the city's historic foundations and allow people to live and spend time there.**

Dubrovnik aims to reverse the demographic erosion that has affected it for several years. Only 1,200 people live in the Old Town, four times fewer than in the early 1990s.

Dubrovnik wants to establish a better balance between tourism and local life. To achieve this, the city has started buying apartments that will be offered to young families under a 10-year lease. This will help to increase the number of residents in the Old Town and create a more sustainable environment where tourism and local life can coexist.

A Barcelona's Precedent

The city where several scenes from the TV series Game of Thrones were filmed is not the only European destination taking drastic measures to limit the increase in vacation rentals.

Another mass tourism destination, Barcelona, has already implemented regulatory tools to control the number of tourist accommodations. In 2015, the town hall established a limit of 9,000 tourist accommodations in its urbanization plan. When a furnished tourist accommodation shuts down in a fully occupied area, another can only open in a "contained growth zone." Additionally, **major tourist sites such as the Sagrada Familia and Park Güell have introduced measures to limit the number of visitors.**

Recently, Catalonia announced stricter regulations for seasonal rentals through a decree. The government plans to eliminate 28,000 addresses to establish a ratio of 10 tourist accommodations per 100 inhabitants.

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