

SEVERE WEATHER AFFECTED THE AUSTRIAN TOURISM SECTOR



Severe floods and storms in various country regions significantly impacted the Austrian tourism sector in September. According to Statistics Austria, overnight stays in hotels, guesthouses, and holiday apartments decreased by 7.4 percent to 11.3 million compared to last year.

However, the current summer season in Austria is showing positive results, with a 0.3 percent increase compared to last year. This marks the best performance since 1981. **From May to September 2024, there have been a total of 72.48 million overnight stays recorded.** According to Statistics Austria, overnight stays by international guests reached 51.72 million, reflecting a 0.7 percent increase, while domestic guests accounted for 20.76 million overnight stays, a decrease of 0.7 percent. Regarding arrivals, 23.09 million guests were counted, representing a 1.7 percent increase.

Clearest Increase

The development of overnight stays this summer season varied based on accommodation category. The 5-star and 4-star sectors and commercial holiday apartments experienced the most significant increases, with rises of 3.1 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. In contrast, the 3-star sector and private accommodations saw substantial declines, with decreases of 3 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively.

Hans Spreitzhofer, the WKÖ Hotel Industry Association chairman, expressed "cautious optimism" regarding the upcoming autumn holidays. He stated, "We are satisfied with the booking situation and have observed that autumn holidays have gained immense significance in recent years." He also noted, "This year, the favorable weather and resulting short-term bookings are particularly beneficial for us."

Over 100 Million Overnight Stays

According to Statistics Austria, 126.98 million overnight stays were registered in the current year until September, 1.06 million (+0.8 percent) more than in the same period last year. Despite positive overnight stay figures and "a good booking situation" for the 2024/2025 winter season, WKÖ representative Spreitzhofer referred to the "economic pressure": "**Good overnight stay figures alone do not ensure the economic stability of businesses,**" he stressed. "The decisive factor is the operating result, which has already fallen by 2 to 4 percentage points in the industry in 2023 compared to 2022." Many companies are struggling with rising costs.

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