



Press release

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10 Tourism

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Tourist accommodation 2017

The Swiss hotel sector grew closer to its record years in 2017

Neuchâtel, 22 February 2018 (FSO) – In 2017, the Swiss hotel industry recorded 37.4 million overnight stays, a level close to that of the record years of 1990 and 2008. Compared with 2016, this represents growth of 5.2% (+1.9 million). Foreign visitors registered 20.5 million overnight stays, a 6.1% increase (+1.2 million). Swiss overnight stays increased by 4.2% (+675 000) and thus reached a total of 16.9 million, the best result to date obtained for this clientele. These are the final results from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

With the exception of the month of February (–36 000 overnight stays / –1.2%), every month in 2017 showed growth compared with the same period a year earlier (in order to neutralise the effect of Easter, the results for March and April were cumulated). June registered the greatest increase (+306 000 / +9.8%). This was followed by the Easter period (+267 000 / +4.9%) then July (+218 000 / +5.4%).

	Overnight stays 2017	Change in % ²
Total	37 392 740	5.2
January	2 709 743	5.2
February	3 049 114	–1.2
March and April cumulated ¹	5 701 610	4.9
May	2 791 766	4.9
June	3 430 831	9.8
July	4 289 083	5.4
August	4 265 016	4.1
September	3 569 618	5.2
October	2 980 995	7.8
November	1 973 338	5.0
December	2 631 626	7.4

¹to neutralise the effect of Easter, the results for March and April were cumulated

²compared with the same period of the previous year

Record domestic demand, sustained increase from America and Asia

In 2017, Swiss demand totalled 16.9 million overnight stays (+675 000 / +4.2%), a level never seen before. Foreign demand reached 20.5 million overnight stays, i.e. an increase of 1.2 million (+6.1%).

After a decline in 2016, the demand from visitors from the Asian continent grew again and recorded 588 000 additional overnight stays (+12.8%). Among the countries of this continent, China (excluding Hong Kong) generated an increase of 148 000 overnight stays (+13.1%), i.e. the largest of this continent. India (+140 000 / +23.4%), the Republic of Korea (+118 000 / +34.7%) and Japan (+47 000 / +13.1) were in keeping with the same dynamic. In contrast, the Gulf States saw the greatest decrease of all countries of origin (−39 000 overnight stays / −4.1%).

The American continent (+307 000 / +12.3%) continued its upward trend started in 2012. With an additional 212 000 overnight stays (+11.5%), the United States saw the strongest absolute growth of all foreign countries and reached its highest level since 2000.

The European continent saw an increase of 255 000 overnight stays (+2.2%). Among the countries of this continent, Belgium (+49 000 / +9.1%) contributed the most to this growth. This was followed by Germany (+41 000 / +1.1%) that last saw an increase in 2008, then Spain (+36 000 / +8.7%) and Russia (+29 000 / +8.8%). Demand from Italy increased slightly (+7500 / +0.8%) and France remained stable (−200 / no relative change). In contrast, the United Kingdom registered a decline of 18 000 overnight stays (−1.1%). Lastly, demand from Oceania showed an increase (+41 000 / +12.7%) while that from Africa decreased (−6500 / −2.3%).

	Year 2017	Change in % ¹
Total Overnight stays	37 392 740	5.2
Switzerland	16 919 875	4.2
Total foreign nationals	20 472 865	6.1
Europe (without Switzerland)	11 871 346	2.2
Africa	5 169 870	12.8
America	2 794 990	12.3
Other continents	636 659	5.7

¹compared with the same period of the previous year

Increase in overnight stays for all tourist regions

The 13 tourist regions recorded increases during 2017 compared with the same period of 2016. Bern Region registered an additional 387 000 overnight stays (+8.2%), the greatest increase seen among all tourist regions. This was followed by the Zurich Region (+340 000 / +6.0%), Valais (+254 000 / + 6.9%), Graubünden (+226 000 / +4.9%) and Ticino (+175 000 / +7.7%).

Stability in length of stay

In 2017, the length of stay was 2.0 nights (as in 2016). Foreign visitors stayed on average for 2.1 nights, slightly longer than domestic visitors (2.0). Among the tourist regions, Graubünden recorded the longest stay with 2.7 nights. This was followed by Valais with 2.3 nights. In contrast, the shortest stay was registered in the Fribourg Region with 1.6 nights.

Slight increase in room occupancy rates

During 2017, the net room occupancy rate was 52.9% (compared with 51.3% in 2016). Of all tourist regions, Geneva showed the highest rate at 66.3%. This was followed by the Zurich Region with a rate of 64.6%. The lowest rate was 39.7% which was recorded in Eastern Switzerland.

Validity of results

The figures in this press release are final. They therefore differ from the provisional results published previously.

Duration of stay

Number of overnight stays divided by the number of arrivals.

Net room occupancy rate

Number of occupied rooms divided by the total net room capacity of the period under review, as a percentage. (The net room capacity is the number of available rooms of an establishment during the month under review multiplied by the number of days this establishment is open during this month).

Tourist regions

Since January 2017, Bern region and the Bernese Oberland have been combined in a single region called Bern region.

This change is due to the new geographical distributions decided by the Swiss Conference of Regional Tourism Directors (RDK/CDR).

For a detailed list of all tourist regions in French please see: [Link](#)

For a detailed list of all tourist regions in German please see: [Link](#)

Change in methodology as of 2017 concerning youth hostels

From 1st January 2017 onwards, fourteen Swiss Youth Hostels most closely resembling the criteria for hotels and similar establishments according to the NOGA (General Classification of Economic Activities) will be included in the hotel statistics. This change should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results for 2017.

To counteract the impact of this change, data for 2016 have been recalculated to include the overnight stays in the fourteen newly-classified establishments. The table below enables the currently published 2017 data to be compared with data from 2016 to which the overnight stays in the fourteen establishments have been added.

	Overnight stays 2016 recalculated	Overnight stays 2017	Change in %
Total	35 986 967	37 392 740	3.9
Switzerland	16 533 018	16 919 875	2.3
Foreign nationals	19 453 949	20 472 865	5.2

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This press release has been established on the basis of the European Statistics Code of Practice, which ensures the independence, integrity and accountability of national and community statistical offices. Privileged access is supervised and under embargo.

Swiss Tourism (ST) received this press release 72 hours before its release in order to prepare the press conference. The Swiss Tourism Federation (STF), hotelleriesuisse (HS), GastroSuisse (GS) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) received it 24 hours before in order to carry out their tasks.