

Semi-annual tourism results: Significant increase in visitors to Cologne

- *Strong growth: 1,756,377 visitor arrivals (11.3 per cent increase) and 3,051,072 overnight stays (13.1 per cent increase)*
- *Attractive travel incentives due to top events and strong trade fairs and congresses*
- *Important source markets for Cologne are recovering*
- *Strongest growth in overnight stays in the Magic Cities rankings*

COLOGNE, August 22, 2017 Cologne is more popular than ever as a leisure and business destination, as shown by the strong growth of its visitor numbers in the first half of this year. From January to June 2017, 1,756,377 visitors came to Cologne (an increase of 11.3 per cent) and generated 3,051,072 overnight stays in this city (an increase of 13.1 per cent).

"This very positive development shows that the visitor figures in Cologne have recovered after a relatively weak 2016 and are even continuing to increase. One attractive travel incentive in the first half of this year was the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship 2017, which brought a large number of visitors from abroad to Cologne. Numerous events, as well as strong trade fairs and congresses, were also important influencing factors," says Josef Sommer, CEO of the Cologne Tourist Board.

Thanks to the broad range of events it is offering in 2017, Cologne is well positioned as a tourist destination. According to its regular schedule, Koelnmesse has already staged strong trade fairs such as imm cologne with LivingKitchen, IDS and interzum in the first half of this year. Concerts by stars such as Phil Collins and Depeche Mode also attracted visitors from far beyond the region. Annual events such as the VELUX EHF FINAL4 also regularly attract numerous guests to Cologne in the first half of every year.

Important source markets are recovering

In the first half of the year, Cologne experienced a considerable upswing of visitors from abroad, with increases of 14.6 per cent in arrivals and 15.0 per cent in overnight stays. Important source markets abroad have shown strong growth:

- Russian visitors increased their overnight stays by 97.5 per cent
- For Chinese visitors, the increase was 17.9 per cent
- For US visitors, there was a 11.3 per cent increase in the first half of the year
- Traditional markets such as Italy (a 25.0 per cent increase) and Spain (a 14.3 per cent increase) also grew significantly.
- Austrian and Swiss visitors were responsible for 17.2 per cent and 18.8 per cent increases in overnight stays respectively.
- The decrease of visitors from the United Kingdom slowed down noticeably, with a relatively small decrease of 4.4 per cent.
- An increase of 12.2 per cent was registered for the high-volume market of Germany, which accounted for two thirds of all visitors to Cologne.

Cologne is growing fastest in the Magic Cities rankings

Cologne led the rankings of the ten Magic Cities from January through May 2017 (not counting Hannover) in several categories. It had the biggest increase of overnight stays by visitors from abroad (17.7 per cent). It also had the biggest increase of total overnight stays (13.1 per cent), which was far greater than the

average increase for all the Magic Cities together (0.6 per cent). Cologne also had the second-highest increase of overnight stays by visitors from Germany: 10.9 per cent (after Frankfurt: 11.9 per cent).

About Cologne Tourist Board:

Cologne Tourist Board is the official tourism organization of the city of Cologne and thus the first point of contact for visitors from all over the world, whether they're coming here on business or to spend their leisure time. Together with its partners, Cologne Tourist Board conducts marketing activities all over the world for Cologne as a travel destination and a convention venue. Its aim is to enhance the city's image and to position Cologne and its surrounding region as an attractive tourist destination and an outstanding convention location in the German and international markets. In the process, it aims to boost added value for the economy of Cologne and the surrounding region.

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