

Media release

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Tourism in Lucerne has almost fully recovered from the pandemic in 2023

After massive pandemic-related losses since 2020, the tourism industry in the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region is almost back to the level of the pre-Covid year 2019. In the city of Lucerne, 20.8% more guests stayed overnight in 2023 than in the previous year and 3.9 percent fewer than in 2019, while the region as a whole saw 12.7 percent more guests than in 2022 and 0.8 percent more than in 2019.

According to the Federal Statistical Office, 1,328,369 overnight stays were recorded in the city of Lucerne last year - an increase of 20.8 percent compared to 2022, or a decrease of 3.9 percent compared to 2019. The Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region as a whole - the cantons of Lucerne, Schwyz, Uri, Obwalden and Nidwalden - recorded 3,944,351 overnight stays. This is 12.7 percent more than in the previous year, and 0.8 percent more than in 2019. In 2023, this exceeded expectations, which had predicted a share of 85% for the city and 93% for the region compared to 2019.

A record summer for guests from America and encouraging figures from Europe

Following a steady recovery in tourism since 2021, this trend continued in 2023. Taking into account the fact that many Swiss guests were unable to travel abroad in 2021 and 2022 and that a catch-up effect was noticeable in 2023, the Swiss market showed sustained positive development in 2023 with an increase of 10.5% in the city and 17.2% in the region compared to 2019. The USA in particular, which has always been the second most important market after Switzerland, has also recovered excellently and quickly: In 2023, 319,761 overnight stays by Americans were recorded in the city of Lucerne (+20.1% compared to 2019) and 440,993 overnight stays in the region (+27.2%). Lucerne is therefore even more popular with US guests than before the pandemic - the summer of 2023 was a record summer at +16 percent compared to 2019. More visitors from other European countries were also welcomed again. Europe is now even slightly above the 2019 level - before Covid (+2.4 percent city/+7.5 percent region). Visitors from Asia also found their way to Lucerne again in 2023. At +82.2% compared to the previous year, the figures for the region as a whole remained 43.1 percent below the 2019 level. Due to the higher proportion of guests from distant markets, tourism in the city of Lucerne has recovered with more delay than in the region. With an increase of 12.7 percent, the region also performed better than the average for all Swiss regions (+9.2 percent).



In general, however, it was not only the number of overnight stays that developed better than expected, but also the added value, which can be seen in the key figures for the city hotel industry, for example: The average daily rate per room increased by 16.2 percent compared to the previous year and by 30 percent compared to 2019. Martin Bütikofer, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Lucerne Tourism, looks back positively on 2023: «The impact of the pandemic was massive. However, tourism recovered well last year. In particular, many guests from Europe have found their way back to us and our most important foreign guests visitors from the USA, even stayed with us more often than in 2019. We are capitalizing on this momentum and have started into 2024 full of confidence. »

Positive momentum and encouraging prospects for 2024

A further recovery in the long-haul markets can be expected in 2024, particularly from Asia. Contrary to expectations, the Chinese market in particular had not yet recovered substantially in late summer 2023. The reasons for this are travel restrictions in China that were lifted late, flight capacities that first had to be expanded again, initial bottlenecks in the issuing of visas and low hotel capacities in Lucerne in summer 2023. It is expected that Chinese guests will increasingly travel to Europe again from early summer 2024 - albeit more individually and in smaller groups and also in winter. According to the forecasts by BAK Economics on behalf of SECO, an increase of +4% can be expected for the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region in 2024 compared to 2023. In general, factors such as inflation and the shortage of skilled workers and personnel will also have an impact on tourism development. In the coming years, Lucerne Tourism will pursue an ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable development of tourism, a diverse mix of source markets for guests, an ideal distribution and utilization of capacity throughout the year and ideal distribution and utilization throughout the year and an extension of the length of stay.

In 2023, most overnight guests came from these markets (market share in %; city / region):

Switzerland: 26% / 47%, USA: 24% / 11%, Germany 6% / 9%, UK 4% / 3%, India 4% / 3%

Statistics on the number of overnight stays in 2023 by market [can be found here](#)

BAK Economics forecasts for the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region 2024 (change compared to 2023):

Winter 2023/24: +3.1% / Summer 2024: +4.5% / Winter 2024/25: +3.2% / Year 2024: +4%

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Information and image material on the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region [can be found here](#).

Lucerne Tourism Ltd (LTAG) is the competence center for positioning, market development, public relations and guest services in the interests of numerous partners who provide first-class services for the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region. The LTAG's tasks are to ensure the first-class quality, authenticity and sustainability of the region's tourism offer.