

Listening, Funding, Showcasing: **Austria's Balanced Tourism Approach**

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Why Balanced Tourism matters in Austria

Tourism is one of Austria's most important industries. To remain competitive and resilient, Austria's tourism policy is guided by "Plan T" which places sustainability at its core. The brochure *Find the Right Balance* underscores that unmanaged tourism growth can lead to "unbalanced tourism" where physical, ecological, social or economic capacities are exceeded. Austria therefore seeks to strike a balance — between guest expectations, business opportunities, natural and cultural assets, and the needs of resident communities.

This balanced approach is aimed at preserving the attractiveness of destinations, maintaining social acceptance and ensuring that tourism remains a positive contributor to regional prosperity and well-being.



**What does it take to keep
guests, locals and nature in
balance?**

Listening: Measuring Tourism Acceptance in Austria

- After a pilot, tourism acceptance among the Austrian population is now measured **annually** by Statistik Austria.
- Added perception questions include:
 - “How do you personally rate the impact of tourism on your place of residence?”
 - “How do you feel about the number of tourists in your area and in Austria overall?”

Key Results (2024)

- **Tourism acceptance balance:** +38 percentage points (positive sentiment).
- **73%** consider tourism very important for Austria's economy, jobs, and leisure.
- **48%** think there are the right number of tourists; only **6%** think there are too many.




Funding: Balanced Tourism Call

- Launched by the **Federal Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism (BMWET)** in March 2024.
- Open to DMOs, tourism associations, and other stakeholders.
- Grants covered **up to 80% of eligible costs** (EUR 10,000–50,000 per project).

Selection & Focus

- **17 out of 21** submitted projects were selected, receiving **EUR 570,000** in total funding.
- Selection criteria: sustainability (social, ecological, economic), feasibility, innovation, and stakeholder involvement.
- Projects came from **all over the country**.

Examples of Topics

- Sustainable mobility and new transport solutions.
 - Visitor flow management using mobile data and weather forecasts.
 - Broad stakeholder participation processes.
 - Strengthening the evidence base for sustainable tourism.
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- Two thick, red, wavy lines that curve upwards from the bottom right corner of the slide.

Showcasing: Balanced Tourism Gallery (STiAS)


Purpose and Rationale

- The **Balanced Tourism Gallery** at **STiAS 2025** was designed to make learning visible.
- It provides a platform for regions to **share real experiences**, **reflect on challenges**, and **exchange practical insights** rather than presenting polished success stories.
- The underlying idea: **Balanced tourism cannot be achieved through one-size-fits-all solutions.**

Learning from Each Other

- Destinations explore **what works, what doesn't, and why**, in a supportive environment.
- The goal is to **accelerate collective learning** and avoid repeating mistakes others have already made.
- This exchange strengthens **capacity-building, innovation**, and **mutual understanding** among Austrian destinations.



A full-page photograph of two hikers running through a grassy mountain meadow. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a dark jacket, light-colored pants, and a large red backpack. The hiker behind him is wearing a green jacket, brown pants, and a yellow backpack. They are both smiling and looking back over their shoulders. In the background, there are rugged mountains and a small wooden hut. A thick red wavy line runs across the bottom of the image, separating the text from the main scene.

**Balanced Tourism is not
about limiting growth – it's
about ensuring that growth
remains meaningful,
responsible and welcome.**

A large, stylized red graphic element on the left side of the slide, consisting of two thick, parallel red lines that form a complex, looping shape, resembling a stylized letter '6' or a knot.

Thank you.