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Stable year for Viking Line

The number of passengers who travelled on Viking Line vessels in 2015 was 6,568,684 (6,610,146) or 0.6 per cent fewer than the year before. Expanded service during the summer from Helsinki (Finland) to Tallinn (Estonia) with the M/S Mariella and the M/S Gabriella was offered for the second straight year, but with a shorter service period in 2015. Cargo volume continued to increase. The number of cargo units carried during 2015 was 133,363 or 3 per cent more than in the previous year.

“A total of almost 6.6 million voyages took place on our vessels during the year, which is encouraging. That shows our customers have faith in us. Viking Line had a stable year in terms of service despite weak economic growth in most nearby regions. The Finnish economy is in a period of negative growth, whereas the Swedish economy is relatively stable and is expected to be among the fastest growing in Europe going forward. The economic situation in Russia has had negative consequences for the travel industry, and the share of Russian passengers has declined. Meanwhile, we can see greater interest in our services elsewhere in Europe and in Asia. The market is stable but subject to tough competition, and the trend is continued growing demand for shorter journeys,” says Jan Hanses, President and CEO of Viking Line.

Service on the various routes

The number of passengers on the Helsinki–Tallinn route during the year was 1,991,072 (2,025,583). Alongside the Viking XPRS, the Mariella and the Gabriella also made extra departures during the summer on this route. The decline in volume, 1.7 per cent compared to 2014, is explained by the lower number of days in service for the extra departures than in 2014.



On the Turku (Finland)–Åland Islands (Finland)–Stockholm (Sweden) route, passenger volume increased. The number of passengers on the Viking Grace and the Amorella was 1,939,807 (1,935,958). Viking Line is the market leader on this route, with a market share of more than 58 per cent.

On the Helsinki–Mariehamn (Åland Islands)–Stockholm route, which is served by the Mariella and the Gabriella, passenger volume decreased to 1,021,145 (1,063,027). This decline is due in part to the Mariella's dry-docking in April and a decrease in passengers from the Russian market.

Passenger volume for the Viking Cinderella, which provides cruises from Stockholm to Mariehamn, increased by a full 7 per cent or 60,086 passengers to 919,087 (859,001). This increase was due to a lengthy dry-docking in January 2014 and growth in Viking Line's market share.

On the short route across the Sea of Åland between Mariehamn and Kapellskär (Sweden), passenger volume on the Rosella was 687,369 (706,578). One reason for the decrease was fewer sailings during the year.

A favourable summer

Because of cold weather in June, the summer got off to a weak start, but volume growth in July and August was strong. More than 2.3 million passengers sailed on the red-and-white-painted vessels in the period June to August. An all-time record was set in July, when Viking Line's passenger volume on all routes reached a record 945,343 passengers or 20,519 more than the record set in 2014. The summer high season is critical to the Company's financial results for the full year.

Increase in online sales

In May, a new booking system was placed in service on Viking Line's websites. The aim was to create a mobile phone-friendly, flexible system since most customers book their voyage online. The share of new online bookings of individual passengers increased about 5 per cent during the year and is now more than 70 per cent.

The Group's Year-end Report for the 2015 financial year will be published on February 23, 2016.

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