

Paris to sue Airbnb over undeclared listings

April 12 2018, by Fabienne Faur, Anne-Sophie Morel



Airbnb wants Paris to follow the lead of London, Berlin and Barcelona in deciding on regulation

Paris is taking home-sharing giant Airbnb to court for failing to remove ads from people who have not properly declared their properties, city authorities said Thursday.

The French capital is also suing the smaller German website Wimdu for the same reason, with the court hearing in Paris set for June 12, Ian Brossat, deputy mayor for housing, told AFP.

"The noose is tightening," he said.

Airbnb said the decision was "disappointing".

"The regulation of furnished tourist rentals in Paris is complex, confusing and more suited to professionals than individuals," it shot back in a statement.

It said it was willing to work with city authorities on developing "simple, clear rules appropriate for everyone".

Paris authorities, like other cities around the world, have been toughening restrictions on Airbnb, faced with complaints from hoteliers as well as residents who believe holiday rentals are fuelling property speculation.

In November 2017, Paris capped the number of days an individual can rent out their home as a short-term let at 120 per year.

Since December, home-owners have been required to display a registration number on their ads listings that authorities can check they are sticking to that 120-day limit.

The French government announced last month that it is drafting a bill to fine Airbnb for carrying numberless ads—1,000 euros a day, plus 5,000 euros (\$6,200) a day for any such new listings appearing on the site.

Yet Airbnb and Wimdu "have not removed the listings", Brossat said, adding that "an overwhelming majority of 85 percent of ads" were

flouting the rules in this way.

"In reality, Airbnb is disrespecting the law," Brossat said, adding that the website had been sent repeated warnings.

"It's incredible that this company is able to break all the rules."

Airbnb called on Paris to follow the lead of other European cities in deciding how to regulate its rentals.

Berlin has previously had one of the strictest regimes for regulating the site in Europe, but announced last month that they would allow residents to rent out their main home without time limitations.

"We encourage Paris to follow the path of other cities such as London, Berlin and Barcelona, with whom we have worked efficiently on common-sense measures to promote responsible furnished tourist rentals," Airbnb said.

Paris is the world's third-most visited [city](#), according to a Mastercard ranking, and one of Airbnb's top markets with some 65,000 homes listed—not much lower than the capital's 80,000 hotel rooms.

Another 35,000 are available on rival platforms.

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Citation: Paris to sue Airbnb over undeclared listings (2018, April 12) retrieved 11 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-04-paris-sue-airbnb-undeclared.html>

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