

SPAIN'S FLOURISHING TOURISM REDUCES UNEMPLOYMENT



Unemployment in Spain has been dropping for four months in a row despite the persistent economic crisis the Euro zone has been experiencing. The continuous drop in unemployment is being greatly attributed to the success in Spain's tourism industry.

Official reports by the government indicate that the number of job seekers in Spain dropped by 127,248. This number represents a 2.6 % drop and leaves the number of unemployed people at around 4.76 million. The number of job seekers in Spain is still very high but the past few months have shown tremendous improvement. Of the four months, June saw the steepest decline since official records were initiated in 1997.

The association between the drop in unemployment and the flourishing tourism industry was revealed from data published by the two sectors around the same time. The reports revealed that in the month of May the tourism industry had recorded the best ever performance ever since it began its regular surveys. The reports indicate that more than 5.8 million foreign tourists visited Spain in May. This represents a seven percent increase compared to May 2012.

Much of the growth resulted from an increase in tourist arrivals from UK and Germany standing at 9.3% and 13.2% respectively. **Tourists from these countries took the advantage of cheap flights offered by travel operators in 2013.** It was also clear that Spain's residents preferred cutting back and vacationing at home as domestic tourism grew by 13.8% in May.

Experts expect Spain's tourism industry to receive a major boost from the continued civil unrests in Turkey. With the tourists opting to go to Spain instead of Turkey the country is likely to record growing tourism numbers similar to when Greece was experiencing hardships.

The number of bookings to various Turkish cities has gone down with more than 40% opening a window of opportunity for Spain. For those who are acquainted with Turkey, Balearics and Costa Del Sol should be tempting.

Spain's Travel Agencies Federation president Rafael Gallego referring to Turkey's situation, was quoted by Europa Press, a news agency, categorically indicating that the oncoming repercussions will be considerable and Spain needs to be prepared. Spain's tourism industry is about to go into its peak season and it seems that the government's recovery plans are working.

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