

BRAZIL: BUSINESS TOURISM DYNAMICALLY DEVELOPING



Last year Brazilian business tourism grew by 8.8%, according to Tourism of Brazil data, and the country is thus placed ninth in the world ranking of ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association).

Business, conferences and large conventions attract a new type of visitor, very different from the usual image of the "leisure and free time" tourist that comes to the country. According to the president of the Brazilian Institute of Tourism, Vicente Neto, high purchasing power and average spending are the distinguishing factors of this new profile.

"Business tourism is of vital importance to us because it encompasses 25.6% of international tourists arriving in the country, in addition to providing a daily average payout of \$126, which is almost double the leisure segment," he said.

The growth of this type of tourism in Brazil is not accidental, but due to a powerful investment plan that the Ministry of Tourism has made for the construction of large convention centers (EUR 156 million for 11 big facilities) with the aim of turning the country into a world leader in business meetings.

So much so that between 2003 and 2013 Brazil has increased the number of conferences and conventions by 408%. According to the latest report of the ICCA, which elaborates a ranking that measures countries with the highest number of conventions and congresses, Brazil currently ranks ninth, while in 2003 the country was on the 19th position.

Brazil has also pursued a policy of decentralization of its offer, thus powering various regions. In the last decade, the number of cities hosting world-class events has grown from 22 to 54. That implication encompassing almost the entire Brazilian territory has been a fundamental value in achieving the organization of the World and Olympic Games.

With a total of 90,000 events per year, one every six minutes on average, **Sao Paulo has become one of the largest business centers in the world and one of the landmarks of the American continent, generating on its own 15% of Brazil's GDP.**

The city of Sao Paulo has 11.5 million inhabitants, representing 6% of Brazilian population, while it hosts 70 different nationalities that are proof of its cosmopolitan character.

In the hectic pace of this mega city, events the size of the Sao Paulo Fashion Week or the Grand Prix Formula 1 Interlagos are common within a very broad cultural and economic activity.

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