

BUSINESS TOURISM IN SPAIN UP 9% IN 2014 GENERATING NEARLY €4.4 B



Business tourism had an economic impact of almost 4.4 billion Euros for Spain in 2014, representing a 9% increase over the previous year, according to a study by The Ostelea Business School of Tourism & Hospitality.

Of this amount, 31% corresponds to the sales by companies involved in conference organization, while 69% is due to the volume generated by other related sectors.

Spain received a total of 4.31 million business tourists last year or 6.6% of the total, representing a 6% increase over 2013. In 2008, however, the number of tourists visiting Spain on business was 5.2 million, 20.6% more than in 2014.

According to the study, the 17.1% decline in the inflow of business tourists has only resulted in a 3.6% decline in the overall impact on the sector.

In terms of total spending by business travelers arriving in Spain, the figure reached 4.273 billion Euros, remaining almost flat, with an average spending of 990 Euros or a decline of 4.9%.

The average stay shortened from 8.6 days in 2008 to an average of 6.1 days in 2014. According to the Ostelea study, business tourism represented 6.8% of total spending by tourists arriving in Spain in 2014 and 7.2% in 2013.

Spending Below the European Average

In contrast, spending by Spanish business travelers accounted for 3.6% of the European total. Spaniards spent more than 2 billion Euros on business trips in 2014, compared to 23 billion by the Germans or 10 billion by the French.

In 2014 some 7% of Spanish international travel was business-related, but the EU average stands at 12% for the same year. The average stay by Spaniards on their international business trips was 4.44 days, 11% more than in 2013, compared with the EU average of 3.49 days.

Third Place in the Ranking

Last year, Spain remained in third place in the world rankings among the countries hosting international conventions over the 2008 to 2014 period, and second only to the US and Germany.

According to figures provided by Ostelea, 758 international conventions were held in the country, 2.85% more than in 2013 and 66.6% more than in 2008.

The number of companies in the convention and trade fair organization sector has increased by 17.5% over the 2008-2014 period, amounting to a total of 4,595 companies.

According to the study, the number of events reached 19,815, up 8.9% from 2008, the year when the

financial crisis began.

3.5 Million Participants

In 2014 the number of event participants rose to 3.5 million, a 4.3% increase over 2008. 70% of participants were local.

The average duration of business events in Spain was 2.31 days in 2014, 1.3% less than the previous year, and with more than 262,000 participants, the FIDMA trade fair in Gijón was the business event that brought most visitors to Spain in 2014.

Most Participants from Catalonia

Of all the autonomous communities, Catalonia, with 23.9%, was the one with the most local participants at business events taking place outside their region. It was followed by the Community of Madrid with 21.6%, and far behind it, Andalucía, with 7.3%.

Catalonia increased its contribution to total local participants in business events by 5%, when compared with 2008, while Madrid increased by 3.8%.

Barcelona and Madrid Capture 66% of Conventions

In 2014 Barcelona and Madrid were ranked in the top 5 of cities with the most international conventions worldwide, with Paris leading the rankings.

The capital occupied the third place with 200 conventions and Barcelona was fifth with 182. Together these two cities represent 66% of all international conventions held in Spain.

Regarding the number of participants, Spain has the second place worldwide, with more than 289,000 attendees. Barcelona is second in the city rankings, with 127,469 participants, followed by Madrid with 91,542 and both being surpassed by Paris.

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