

# CATALAN CRISIS AFFECTED THE TOURISM SECTOR IN BARCELONA



Bookings in the hotels in Barcelona are down by 10% for the first trimester of 2018, which could bring the hoteliers to lay off some of their staff. It is clear that the Catalan crisis have had a considerable impact on tourism.

If the decrease in hotel bookings continues, **"tourism sector leaders may have to start adjusting their number of employees to adapt to the lower demand levels,"** explains a representative of Exceltur, which brings together the main hotel chains, tour agencies, and reservation centers in Spain.

"Hotels anticipate an average decline of 8.2% of their staff in the first trimester compared to the same period in 2017-2018, and by 5% for car rental companies," according to this statement. About 400,000 people work in tourism in Catalonia, often with precarious contracts. For the year-end holiday period, bookings are down by 15% in Barcelona, the most visited city in Spain.

## **Catalan Crisis: Tourism Represents 12% of GDP**

The impact of the political crisis triggered by the illegal referendum on 1 October can be seen almost exclusively in the Catalan capital, where the majority of the mass demonstrations took place, says Exceltur. Tourism activity has dropped in Barcelona by 11 percent in October, and slightly less, by 9 percent, in November.

**Foreign tourist arrivals have dropped by 5% in October in Catalonia, where the tourism sector represents 12% of GDP.** The Spanish Government and the international monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization of economic cooperation and development (OECD) warned that a prolonged political crisis could tackle the growth in 2018. 2.931 companies moved their headquarters out of Catalonia since early October, according to the latest official data released recently.

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