

# EDINBURGH LOSES GROUND IN THE BUSINESS TOURISM SECTOR



Up until 3 years ago, Edinburgh had been sitting proudly in the top 20 in the world business tourism rankings. Nowadays, it has fallen out of this elite group and is behind the developing places such as Kuala Lumpur, Prague and Sao Paolo. Edinburgh now sits in 27th place. This information was released on the basis of new figures from an international congress. This change has been put down to poor infrastructure and the lack of 4 and 5 star hotels. Another reason, of course, is the continual growth of other cities and the general improved level of spoken English in non-English speaking countries.

Nevertheless, despite the fall in the popularity of Edinburgh for business tourists, the fact remains that the importance of business tourism is greater than it used to be. Generally, the business tourist spends 80% more than the leisure tourist. This is often due to the fact that their expenses tend to be covered by their companies. The value of business tourism is huge; one only needs to take the example of Shanghai to see how much a city can prosper from it.

The Edinburgh Convention Bureau has recognised the great value of business tourism and has begun taking steps to make sure that Edinburgh realises its potential. A degree of success was shown last year as the ECB managed to secure a total of 165 conferences, estimated to have been worth L68.5 million to the Scottish capital. The inaugural European Stem Cells Business Summit proved to be the biggest success with 700 delegates arriving in the city. There would have needed to have been almost twice as many leisure tourists in the city at the same time to have produced the same financial results. With higher financial gain at stake, getting back on the ladder of the world's business tourism elite is an absolute must for Edinburgh.

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