

CANARY ISLANDS EXPECT A COMEBACK OF BRITISH TOURISTS



This year, the Canary Islands have lost an average of 25,000 British visitors a month, with a total of 229,000 during the first nine months of 2018, a drop that the public administration and hotel associations hope to contain by the end of this year, thanks to the destination's winter attractions.

Isaac Castellano, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sports for the Government Council of the Canary Islands, said that despite efforts made to diversify the inbound tourism of Canary Islands, the British market remains as one its largest contributors. **One in three tourists comes from the UK.**

This year, the most promising forecast is that the autonomous community might welcome about 5 million tourists from the United Kingdom, according to Castellano.

The figure is considered critical for the sector, as it will be "the last before the British exit from the European Union, scheduled for March 29, 2019, becomes effective." Castellano acknowledged that the impact of the so-called Brexit will have on next year's financial statement for the Spanish archipelago remains "unknown", because, as he recalled, the main doubt is still unresolved: whether the country's exit will be on good terms, or if it'll close the door on bilateral relations. This setting, the one with a harsh Brexit, as the Minister for the Government Council of the Canary Islands reminds, would make traveling difficult for British tourists in the European territory.

Castellano also mentioned that, at least during this year, the 7% decrease on arrivals is being offset by a 6.4% increase in expenditure of this segment, who has been visiting the islands for the holidays.

The Minister trusts that the islands are able to end 2018 as the second best year of its tourist history, despite the estimated loss of about 500,000 visitors.

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