

SPAIN TO WELCOME 12 MILLION CRUISE PASSENGERS THIS YEAR



The president of Ports of the State of Spain, Salvador de la Encina, said that cruise tourism is “very important” for the Spanish economy because of the jobs and revenues it generates.

According to data from Puertos del Estado, Spain received 10,178,169 cruise passengers in 2018, which means a new record in a series started in 2012 when 7.5 million were recorded. **De la Encina stressed that with a growth strategy in which all actors are involved, it is possible to reach 12 million this year.**

In the first two months of 2019, 1,089,263 cruise passengers arrived to Spanish ports, 5.7% more than in the same period of the previous year.

According to the data provided by the International Association of Cruise Lines (CLIA), the direct contribution of the cruise activity to the Spanish economy was 1,481 million euros in 2017 (1,669 million dollars), 12% more than in 2015, and the sector provided direct employment to 31,233 people.

De la Encina pointed out that the number of direct and indirect jobs could be close to 100,000, supporting the idea that it is a “vital” sector for the Spanish economy.

In the last 25 years, the volume of cruise passengers arriving in Spain had multiplied by 20, from just over 480,000 in 1992, when Puertos del Estado was created, to 10.1 million in 2018, he said.

After Italy, Spain is the country of the Old Continent most visited by cruise passengers and some Spanish ports, such as Barcelona and the Balearic Islands, are leaders in Europe and have privileged positions in the global context. There are eight Spanish ports among the 50 best in the world.

As for the passengers who started or ended a trip in a Spanish port (ports considered as the base) Eurostat, the European statistics agency, notes that they amounted to 3 million last year, behind Italy (3.7 million) but ahead of Germany (2.9 million) and United Kingdom (1.9 million).

The Mediterranean Façade's ports, with Barcelona and the Balearic Islands at the head, with 3 million and 2.4 million passengers, respectively, had the most cruise passengers: 6,888,298 passengers, which represent 67.7% of the total and an increase of 11.35% compared to 2017.

Not counting the Canaries, the ports of the Atlantic–Cantabrian Façade received 939,190 cruise passengers, that is, 9.2% of the national total, and experienced a growth of 5.75%. **The ports of A Coruña, Vigo and Bahía de Cádiz stood out.**

The ports of the Canary Islands, favored by their geographical location and climatology that circumvents the seasonality of the sector, attracted 2.3 million cruise passengers (6.5% +) and represented 23.1% of the national total.

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