

# ABOUT 17 M INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS VISITED SPAIN IN SUMMER



The number of international tourists arriving to Spain in the summer (July-September) will reach 16.9 million, this represents 45% of those who visited Spain in 2019, the Secretary of State for Tourism, Fernando Valdés, has pointed out.

In the absence of official figures for September of the National Statistics Institute (INE), Valdés takes for granted that the 16.9 million total visitors mark will be reached before summer. **In July and August, 9.6 million visitors entered the country.**

The Secretary of State also highlighted the progressive improvement in Social Security enrolment in the sector, which in September rose by 6% over that month last year, with 134,903 more workers, with increases in all categories, except in travel agencies.

Social Security affiliates in the tourism sector grew by 6% in September compared to a year ago, with 134,903 more workers, so that employment in this type of activity already reaches 2,365,731 employees, although it continues to fall in travel agencies.

He also pointed out that of the million workers who were in the Temporary Employment Regulation Files (ERTE) status during the worst moments of the pandemic, only 104,834 people remain in this status in September.

The best evolution in the summer has been that of domestic tourism, followed by European tourism, while more distant destinations have barely started.

This is reflected in the figures of overnight stays of the INE, which in the case of residents are even at higher levels than in the pre-covid times, and especially in some autonomous communities such as the Balearic Islands.

Other figures that support the improvement: in Alicante, in August, there were more establishments open than in that month of 2019 with occupancy rates of 78%, and the accommodation sector recorded higher revenues than two years ago in communities such as Andalusia, Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha.

Also, European tourist numbers coming to Spain have evolved very positively: 91% more tourists came from the Netherlands in comparison to August 2019, from Belgium that number is above 70%, and from Germany, 60%.

However, between June and August tourist spending has been 2.5 times higher than last year. Specifically, in the Balearic Islands, it was 40% higher than in 2019.

However, Catalonia and Madrid are still far from recovering to pre-pandemic levels, mainly because they depend much more on the long flights (especially from Latin America) which has not yet recovered.

As for the rest of the year, the Secretary of State is optimistic and is supported by Eurocontrol data,

which, in its basic scenario, **indicate that operations in Spain (now at 72.6%) will increase to 85% in March of next year and could even reach 93% in its most favorable scenario.**

He recalled that the Government has injected more than 52,000 million euros into the sector through different instruments (ICO guarantees, ERTE, aid to the self-employed...), in addition to the bailouts of companies in the sector from the Solvency Support Fund for Strategic Companies of the State Industrial Ownership Corporation (SEPI, in Spanish).

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