

SPAIN WELCOMES 50 MILLION TOURISTS THIS SUMMER



Spain is expected to welcome around 50 million tourists between June and September, with an almost equal number of local travelers (51%) and foreign tourists (49%). According to "The Tourism Model at the Crossroads of Recovery" report, this information suggests that this summer season will see 160 million overnight stays - a 1.8% increase from 2019. Foreign tourism is expected to make up the majority of overnight stays (60%) due to their higher purchasing power and the more extended average stay in Spain than Spaniards (40%).

In addition, the number of employees in the sector could reach around 280,000 during the summer, given the high activity level at the year's peak.

Regarding travel segments, the report highlights that sun and beach tourism recovered better after the pandemic than the MICE tourism sector.

"Exceptional" tourism data of 2022

Last year, overnight stays increased by 85.6% and reached 320.7 million. Most of this increase was due to foreign tourists, who contributed 63%. Visitors also rose by 69%, reaching over 102 million, including domestic and foreign travelers. This represents an increase of almost 42 million visitors compared to the previous year. Regarding profitability, the hotel sector saw a rise in the average daily Revenue per Occupied Room (RevPOR) to 104.70 euros, a 12% increase from 2022. Currently, this index is 18% higher than in 2019.

Threats to the sector ahead

The rising prices in the hospitality industry may negatively impact the demand for tourism services in the upcoming summer season, as salaries have decreased in purchasing power at a general level. Experts suggest that this devaluation of wages is particularly prevalent in the hotel and restaurant sector, which already has a precarious financial situation and is among the lowest-paying industries in the country.

In addition, the over-reliance placed on the English, French, German, and Nordic markets is another issue that needs to be addressed in future transformations. These markets comprise more than half of foreign tourism but have declined since the pandemic.

However, visits from Ireland (23%), the Netherlands (17%), and Portugal (7%) are showing strong dynamism and are gaining specific weight, with a total of 295,000 more visitors if we compare the start of this year with that of 2019.

Experts recommend acting quickly to create a unique offer that reflects the increasing interest of other international markets in Spanish tourism. It's also an old idea to expand cultural and leisure tourism options and cater to specific groups like senior or junior tourists, which are high-yield markets with sustainable activity standards.

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