

HOSTELTUR

69

SPECIAL **2025**  
**MICE**  
& BUSINESS

MEETING TOURISM GROWS,  
INNOVATES AND ENRICHES  
THE EVENT EXPERIENCE

ILLUNION Alcora Sevilla



INSPIRATION FOR YOUR NEXT MICE EVENT

Are you planning an event, conference, exhibition, or talk?  
Think big! Whatever the occasion, we adapt to your needs  
to provide the perfect space.

With over 530 hotels and resorts in more than 56 countries, Minor Hotels  
is the partner you need to make your event truly memorable.

We offer tailored solutions, impeccable service, cutting-edge technology  
and a professional team by your side every step of the way.  
Organizing large-scale events has never been this easy.

Discover some of our hotels located in Spain's major cities.



Book now  
for your next event

nh-hotels.com/en/nhpro/  
gso.hub@nh-hotels.com

EDITORIAL

Spearheading Innovation

The MICE sector (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Events) consolidated its recovery in Spain in 2023, the last year for which data is available, and is preparing to close this year with very positive figures, according to key indicators from the various entities, analysts and sector agents consulted for this special report.

In 2023, the turnover for business tourism was €13,367 million in Spain: this year, it could reach more than €14,800 million. Caution is called for given the global uncertainty but, if this trend continues, a moderate estimate indicates a turnover of €15,200 million in 2025 or €15,600 million in the most optimistic projection. Spain has all the ingredients to achieve this, with two of the most important cities at the European and global level in the MICE sector, as well as other solidly popular destinations, and several more which are beginning to emerge strongly.

In terms of business travel, the **Global Business Travel Association (GBTA)** estimates that its spending will increase by 10.4% this year worldwide, at 360.4 billion euros, with Europe as the second fastest-growing region behind Asia-Pacific. It estimates that European business travel spending will account for 26.4% of the global total in 2024, slightly below 2019 levels, although Spain, Greece, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland have already surpassed pre-pandemic spending.

Beyond these rising figures, it is widely agreed that MICE tourism is one of the most dynamic sectors because it also acts as a spearhead for innovation and adaptation to new trends.

While sustainability initially gained momentum through carbon footprint measurement, energy optimization and waste management, digitalization – already well-established in the MICE sector – proved crucial during the pandemic and has since evolved far beyond that, enriching the overall event experience.

In order to realise the potential for growth and achieve these figures, the sector believes that it will need to focus more on sustainability, diversify destinations and specific locations, and advance the development of event content. Technology and all the potential of AI will play a key role in this, with new solutions and tools that until recently sounded like science fiction but are now available and will be indispensable.

In addition, it will be crucial to ensure that events serve to forge valuable strategic alliances and continue to evolve in order to surprise participants positively. They should be hyper-personalised, foster connections with the local environment, and entertain in order to encourage engagement and participation.

INDEX

- CATALONIA 54
- MADRID 60
- ANDALUSIA 62
- MURCIA 64
- BASQUE COUNTRY 66
- ASTURIAS 70

A PUBLICATION BY THE  
HOSTELTUR COMMUNICATION GROUP

**PRESIDENTE:** Joaquín Molina García-Muñoz  
**EDITOR:** Manuel Molina Espinosa  
**DIRECTOR GENERAL:** Carlos Hernández Méndez  
carlos.hernandez@hosteltur.com

**DIRECTOR:**  
Manuel Molina Espinosa  
manuel.molina@hosteltur.com  
@manolomolinaesp

**REDACTORA JEFE:**  
Ángeles Vargas  
angeles.vargas@hosteltur.com  
@angelesvargaspe

**REDACCIÓN:**  
**MADRID**  
Carmen Porras  
carmen.porras@hosteltur.com  
@carmenhosteltur  
Vivi Hinojosa  
vivi.hinojosa@hosteltur.com  
@vivi\_hinojosa  
Miriam González  
miriam.gonzalez@hosteltur.com  
@miriamgrg

**SEVILLA**  
Ángeles Vargas  
angeles.vargas@hosteltur.com  
@angelesvargaspe

**PALMA DE MALLORCA**  
Diana Ramón  
diana.ramon@hosteltur.com  
@dianaramonv  
Taiana González  
taiana.gonzalez@hosteltur.com  
@taianahosteltur  
Jesús Luis  
jesus.luis@hosteltur.com  
@jlhosteltur1  
**BARCELONA**  
Xavier Canalis  
xavier.canalis@hosteltur.com  
@XavierCanalis

**Responsable de identidad digital:**  
Sandra Mirey  
sandra.mirey@hosteltur.com

**Responsable de contenido audiovisual:**  
Lluc García  
lluc.garcia@hosteltur.com

**Eventos y nuevos proyectos:**  
Ángela de Lara  
angela.delara@hosteltur.com  
@AngeladelLara

**PUBLICIDAD:**  
**Director Comercial:**  
José Godoy  
jose.godoy@hosteltur.com  
@josehosteltur  
Tel.: +34 971 73 20 73  
**Oficina Central:**  
Angus López  
angus.lopez@hosteltur.com  
Tel.: +34 971 73 20 73  
**Madrid:** Carmen Gimeno  
Carmen Gimeno@hosteltur.com  
Tels.: +34 676 46 20 56  
**Barcelona:** Iván Vega  
ivan.vega@hosteltur.com  
@ivanvegagarcia  
Tel.: +34 93 473 16 93

**MAQUETACIÓN:** David Molina  
david.molina@hosteltur.com  
@davidhosteltur  
FOTOGRAFÍA: Archivo Hosteltur  
IMPRESIÓN: Ingrama, S.L.

**EDITA**  
Ideas y Publicidad de Baleares, S.L.  
Joan Miró, 79 · 07015 Palma de Mallorca, Baleares  
Teléfono: 971 732073  
Depósito legal: PM298-1994  
ISSN: 2952-4776

**www.hosteltur.com**  
**hosteltur@hosteltur.com**  
**@hosteltur**



The MICE industry, with a revenue of €13,367 million in 2023, is exceeding expectations this year, according to the Spain Convention Bureau

# BUSINESS TOURISM SHOWS STRONG GROWTH IN 2024

Personalised and immersive experiences, the relationship with wellness and the local environment, and advances in technology and environmental and social sustainability are driving important improvements in Spanish events. Spain, the world's third-largest MICE destination, has recovered faster and better than expected and could exceed 11 million conference tourists in 2025.

“2024 is proving to be a year of consolidation, very positive for the MICE industry in Spain”, states **Vicent Mari Torres, president of the Spain Convention Bureau (SCB)**. Although the sector has faced challenges and obstacles, including hotel price increases due to inflation, he declared to **Hosteltur** that “generally speaking, the expectations presented at the beginning of the year are being exceeded in many respects”.

In 2023, the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) sector consolidated its post-pandemic recovery, and 2024 is showing clear growth. The sector demonstrates strength, with increased activity in major Spanish destinations as well as in medium-sized and even less frequented MICE destinations.

Business tourism recovered from the pandemic in 2023 and consolidated its growth despite global tensions (which are now intensifying) and their effects on

the Spanish economy. Within the context of a full return to in-person events, the recovery of Spain's meetings industry was consolidated in 2023 with an 8.55% growth compared to 2019 and a revenue of €13,367 million, according to SCB data, which represents 63 meeting destinations within the **Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP, Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias)**. The SCB report for the last complete fiscal year predicted steady growth for 2024 and 2025. This year is currently exceeding expectations, although the sector remains vigilant and is closely monitoring the geopolitical situation.

## TRIPLE THE SPEND

In 2023, Spain recorded 10.36 million business travellers, 1.47% more than before the pandemic, with an average spend per person of €351.90, which is 10.3% higher than in 2019, owing to price increases

over the last two years. The SCB forecasts approximately 10.7 million business travellers for 2024 and expects to exceed 11 million by 2025.

When comparing the average daily spending of business travellers (€351.90) versus leisure travellers (€127.40), business travellers continue to spend nearly three times more. The average length of stay remains relatively stable, both for domestic business travellers (increasing from 3.1 to 3.2 days) and international visitors (dropping slightly from 5.7 to 5.6 days).

**2024 is proving to be a year of consolidation, very positive for the MICE industry in Spain, according to the Spain Convention Bureau**



Spain could attract more than 11 million conference tourists in 2025.





The healthcare sector is one of the most active in business tourism. 300 doctors attended the XVII Meeting of the Systemic Autoimmune Diseases Group (GEAS) in Málaga.

## Spain welcomed 10.36 million business travellers in 2023, with an average spending per person of €351.9, 10.3% higher than pre-pandemic levels

Among Spain's advantages, the SCB highlights the wealth of cities and regions beyond Madrid and Barcelona that can grow as MICE destinations, helping to reduce congestion in the most visited cities and promote economic development in emerging destinations, offering authentic and unique experiences.

### NUMBER THREE IN THE WORLD

With numerous favourable indicators in the last fiscal year with consolidated data, Spain ranks as the world's third-largest destination for major conferences, ac-

cording to the **International Congress and Convention Association's (ICCA)** 2023 ranking report. With 505 major international meetings, Spain dropped one place in relation to Italy (with 553), and the United States remained the undisputed leader (690).

Barcelona is the world's fifth most popular city for the sector, hosting 139 major international events in 2023, dropping one place from the previous year; Madrid ranks eighth with 109 events, down two places, and Valencia ranks 44th with the same number of large meetings.

The outlook for next year is favourable: two of the best destinations for meetings and events in Europe are in Spain, with Madrid in second position and Barcelona in third, according to **American Express GBT's** recent report, '2025 Global Meetings and Events Forecast'. These rankings are based on a survey of 172 Amex GBT event professionals and their client event data.

### CONNECTION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

SCB President Vicent Marí Torres emphasises that Spanish destinations continue to see a strong return to in-person events, successfully integrating digitalisation to enhance event experiences, demonstrating considerable adaptability.

He warns that the significant impact of price increases in the hotel industry cannot be ignored, forcing many organisers to allocate a larger portion of their budget to accommodation, "which has limited their ability to invest in other crucial aspects of events".

For Marí, who is also President of the **Consell de Ibiza** (Ibiza Council), "the most inspiring aspect is seeing how destinations and organisers are responding to these challenges more creatively and strategically, while maintaining or improving event quality". He explains that more personalised experiences are gaining importance, focusing not only on



# THANKS TO YOUR TRUST,

In 2024 we have grown 30% in the MICE segment

**5400**  
Rooms

**31**  
Hotels

**15**  
Destinations

**+13.000m**  
Meeting Rooms

Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Málaga, Bilbao, Huelva, Cádiz, Menorca, Extremadura, Girona, Sevilla, Zaragoza, San Sebastián, Lanzarote.



content but also on wellness and connection with the local environment, citing wellbeing programs and immersive experiences as examples that are making a difference in attendee satisfaction and event quality.

According to Marí, sustainability

communities, highlighting the development of a MICE Tourism Plan currently being tested in seven pilot destinations within the network which have already begun implementing several initiatives with the collaboration of SCB.

The sector analysis by the SCB president indicates that "the industry climate is optimistic, which is always a good indicator". As in recent years, "there is a strong commitment from organisers and participants to innovate and adapt to new sector demands." Additionally,

### Two of the five main European destinations for meetings and events in 2025 are in Spain: Madrid and Barcelona, according to the American Express GBT outlook report

commitment to sustainability will remain a priority: "While factors like price continue to dominate decision-making, organisers and attendees will increasingly value events that have a positive impact on communities and the environment. I'm confident that Spain's MICE industry will continue to evolve, offering exceptional experiences and contributing to a more sustainable and responsible future", predicts Marí.

#### LEADING THE WAY

Data shows that Spain has recovered faster and better than the global sector. For example, the **'Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2024: Global Trends'** report by the **World Travel & Tourism Council** (WTTC) forecasts 'a rapid and solid recovery in MICE tourism' and predicts that business travel spending will exceed pre-pandemic levels 'sooner than expected', while Spain has already surpassed these levels significantly. WTTC expects global corporate travel spending 'to reach \$1.5 trillion in 2024, representing a 6.2% increase on 2019 levels'.

The United States leads this growth: in 2019, it represented 30% of global business travel spending, and is now expected to exceed its historic record, reaching \$472 billion, a 13.4% increase on 2019. China, the second-largest global market, is also recovering strongly, with projected corporate travel spending growth of 13.1%, reaching near-



The MICE industry generated revenue of €13,367 million in 2023, according to the Spain Convention Bureau. SCB 2024 constituent assembly in Seville.

"continues to establish itself as a fundamental pillar in event planning", adding: "This year we've made significant progress toward more responsible practices, a good example being the work that the Spain Convention Bureau is carrying out under the 'Spain Tourism Experiences Agreement', signed between **FEMP** and the **State Secretary for Tourism** and funded by Next Generation EU". This work "seeks to measure and minimise the negative impact of events, for example through new digital tools, and also aims to leave a positive legacy in host

#### IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

Looking ahead to 2025, expectations are optimistic and align with trends observed in 2024. Pending the new annual SCB report on the meetings industry due early next year, "all indicators suggest that trends such as experience personalisation will continue to be the broad approach to remain competitive in the current inflationary context", Marí tells Hosteltur. Events are evolving toward more immersive and meaningful formats, "which will undoubtedly enrich participant experience".

THE CATERING FOR YOUR EVENTS IN MADRID

# GASTRONOME 360

Juan Pozuelo



WE CREATE  
**UNIQUE**  
GASTRONOMIC  
**EXPERIENCES**



ly \$211 billion.

Europe follows this trend, with key markets such as Germany expected to reach spending of \$87.5 billion, very close to its pre-pandemic figures. The UK and France expect to surpass their own records, spending of \$84.1 billion and \$42.1 billion respectively.

One of the relevant aspects addressed in the WTTC study is that, while business travel suffered an immediate strong impact during the pandemic due to the rise of remote work and virtual meetings, it's now experiencing greater momentum because in-person interactions have been re-evaluated.

During the report presentation, WTTC CEO **Julia Simpson** emphasised that business travel is not only recovering but exceeding expectations, supported by the fact that, although virtual meetings helped during the pandemic, "business thrives more in face-to-face meetings", which has renewed demand for this type of travel.

**SIX TIMES MORE VALUE**

The 'Business Travel Trends 2024' report by **Globetrender** in collaboration with **CytricEasy by Amadeus** also forecasts the recovery of business tourism spending to pre-pandemic levels this year.

Looking ahead, **Allied Market Research** data indicates enormous growth in the global MICE industry. Valued at \$345.8 billion in 2021, it's projected to reach \$2.1 trillion by 2031, a sixfold increase.

**LEADING THE PACK**

The SCB identified, among other challenges, the need to diversify destination options within Spain to promote the development of lesser-known areas and prevent saturation in major cities. While Barcelona and Madrid remain the undisputed leaders in event tourism, other cities like Valencia, Palma, Seville and Málaga increasingly attract larger events. Other locations, including Bilbao, Ibiza,

Zaragoza and Burgos, are gaining interest thanks to their distinctive offerings.

Barcelona, which held 1,945 events with 582,198 participants and an economic impact of €1,063.24 million in 2023, is set to improve these figures this year, according to the Barcelona Convention Bureau. It maintains its position as the third most important congress destination in EMEA according to American Express GBT's '2025 Global Meetings and Events Forecast: Top Meeting Destinations'.

The **Madrid Convention Bureau** (MCB) is celebrating its 40th anniversary at a high point for event tourism in the city: in 2023, it hosted more than 53,500 meetings with 2.66 million visitors, generating a direct economic impact of €2,327 million and an estimated total impact of €5,238 million for the city. The MCB has been promoting the Spanish capital as a venue for congresses, professional meetings and major events, through public-private collaboration

**DERBY HOTELS COLLECTION**

BARCELONA MADRID  
LONDON & PARIS

Present in Barcelona, Madrid, London and Paris, Derby Hotels Collection is one of the most prestigious hotel companies in the country with more than 50 years in the sector. Its hotels are spaces where art, culture and luxury coexist. Thus, each of its establishments houses a unique collection of works of art.

In the very centre of Barcelona and Madrid, our hotels have a wide range of meeting rooms and singular and unique spaces for all kinds of events.



**CLARIS HOTEL & SPA 5\* GL Monument, Barcelona**

In Barcelona, located in the late 19th century Palacio Vedruna, the **Clarís** stands out for its elegant 124 rooms that combine archaeological pieces and antiques with the most contemporary design, as well as for its pre-Columbian art museum. It has 10 meeting rooms to organise any type of event, in addition to its business centre. Not to be forgotten is its exquisite gastronomic offer, in La Terraza del Clarís or its Japanese restaurant, Os-Kuro.

[www.hotelclaris.com](http://www.hotelclaris.com)  
[claris@derbyhotels.com](mailto:claris@derbyhotels.com)



**HOTEL GRANADOS 83 4\*S Monument, Barcelona**

**Granados 83** is located in Barcelona's Eixample district. Its oxidised iron structure, inspired by New York's Soho, contrasts with the stone and glass façade, and contains a collection of Hindu, Buddhist and Roman art. It has 77 rooms, four meeting spaces and a business centre, as well as the Terrace bar 8 with views of the city centre, Restaurant 3 with outdoor patio and the G Bar cocktail bar.

[www.hotelgranados83.com](http://www.hotelgranados83.com)  
[granados83@derbyhotels.com](mailto:granados83@derbyhotels.com)

Hotel	Meeting Spaces	Square Meters	Maximum Capacity	Exterior Spaces
Hotel & Spa Claris ***** GL (Barcelona)	10	957	200	Yes
Hotel Granados 83 ***** S (Barcelona)	4	339	100	Yes
Hotel Urban ***** GL (Madrid)	13	1.782	300	Yes
Hotel Villa Real ***** (Madrid)	9	990	220	Yes



**HOTEL URBAN 5\* GL, Madrid**

Located in the heart of Madrid's museum triangle, the **Urban** is an ethnic, magical and unique hotel. With avant-garde architecture and a marked Art Deco style, the hotel has an extensive collection of works of art from Papua New Guinea. In addition to its 96 rooms, it has 13 rooms and spaces for events, as well as a business centre. Enjoy a Michelin-starred menu at CEBO, prepared by Javier Sanz and Juan Sahuquillo, and savor cocktails at the Glass Bar, designed by the creators of Sips, Marc Álvarez and Simone Caporale, 'Best Cocktail Bar in the World 2023' and 'Third Best Cocktail Bar in the World 2024' according to The World's 50 Best Bars.

[www.hotelurban.com](http://www.hotelurban.com) · [urban@derbyhotels.com](mailto:urban@derbyhotels.com)



**HOTEL VILLA REAL 5\*, Madrid**

The **Villa Real** is an exquisite hotel located opposite the Congreso de los Diputados and just a few minutes walk from Puerta del Sol. An ideal location to explore the centre of the city on foot. In its 115 rooms and different spaces you will find a collection of restored mosaics from the Roman period and Syrian origin. In addition to a business centre, the hotel has nine rooms for events. The East restaurant and cocktail bar, the terrace and its pool complete its offer.

[www.hotelvillareal.com](http://www.hotelvillareal.com)  
[villareal@derbyhotels.com](mailto:villareal@derbyhotels.com)

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

# Double double balance balance everywhere everywhere

On all your company's trips between 15 November and 15 December, your TAP Corporate accrued balance is doubled.

**Book now**  
conditions at  
[tapcorporate.com](http://tapcorporate.com)

**TAP AIR PORTUGAL**  
Embrace the World



between the city council and the local tourism sector, for more than four decades. Currently, the MCB has more than 220 members.

Valencia is growing as a business destination, thanks to improved accessibility, as well as more and better accommodation options, and comprehensive event infrastructure, led by the Conference Centre and the City of Arts and Sciences (Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias).

Palma, which ranks sixth by number of attendees, combines excellent European accessibility, extensive experience in tourism and professionalism. There is also a wide range of hotels with facilities like the Conference Centre, which increased its revenue by 40% in 2023 and staff by 25%. It hosted 139 events with a remarkable number of participants (over 70,000), of whom 35% were international, and recorded revenue of €22.4 million. 88% of the meetings

and events took place outside the summer months and generated over 90,000 hotel stays in the city.

The Ibiza Conference Centre has hosted almost 450,000 attendees in its 16-year history as a MICE tourism magnet on the island. The landmark convention centre in Santa Eulària has hosted 2,374 events of all types since its inauguration in 2008. In 2023, there were 32,624 attendees at 79 events, including 6 congresses and 7 international con-

**Madrid, where the convention bureau is celebrating its 40th anniversary, hosted over 53,500 meetings with 2.66 million visitors in 2023, generating a direct economic impact of €2,327 million**

ventions.

Burgos City Council, through the Society for the Promotion and Development of Burgos (ProBurgos, Sociedad para la Promoción y Desarrollo de la Ciudad de Burgos), is developing an ambitious plan to become a leading conference destination. The Congress Office/Convention Bureau will lead this initiative through a comprehensive action plan and strategic partnerships aimed at establishing the city as a preferred destination. The plan will unite key stakeholders from across the business community, including industry leaders, decision-makers, and experts from both academic and communications fields.

The Fórum Evolución in Burgos will host the Dance World Cup world finals from July 3-12, 2025, with an estimated economic impact of more than €30 million and 25,000 attendees, including more than 9,000 dancers from 55 countries. ■



Live cooking at Gastrónoma, Valencia Trade Fair (Feria de Valencia).

# CALVIÀ MICE: A YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION THAT OFFERS MORE THAN SUN, SEA AND SAND

PR

Calvià, renowned for its stunning setting between mountain and sea in western Mallorca, is establishing itself as a strategic destination for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism, through a redefined tourism proposition, a commitment to extending seasonal appeal and prioritising quality.

The transformation of Calvià into a year-round destination aims to attract increasingly discerning travellers seeking more than a traditional seaside destination.

The opportunities for MICE tourism are clear, as Calvià's range of facilities and services for visitors are ideally suited to this segment, which seamlessly blends work, professional and personal experiences and activities.

## A DESTINATION TAILORED TO BUSINESS TOURISM

Calvià provides a wide range of modern public and private facilities, a unique natural environment, and a rich cultural heritage.

But that's not all. According to Juan Antonio Amengual, the Mayor of Calvià, the destination also boasts "an unbeatable asset", proudly explaining that "the people working in hospitality, services and the range of complementary activities add the greatest value, and guarantee that our high-quality tourism meets the most exacting standards".

## COMMITMENT TO EXTENDING THE TOURISM SEASON

Calvià has emphatically demonstrated its credentials for hosting events by securing ABTA's annual convention in Magaluf for October 2025. This event will draw 4,500 British travel agents to the newly refurbished Meliá Calvià Beach and Meliá South Beach hotels, significantly boosting the municipality's international profile.

"The arrival of ABTA in Calvià aligns with our work to break the seasonality curve", explains Amengual, adding that "Calvià is not abandoning traditional seaside tourism. What we want is to establish



Magaluf will host 4,500 British travel agents in October 2025, positioning itself as a MICE destination.

the municipality as a high-spending destination. We believe different profiles can be compatible to maximise potential."

The annual convention will showcase another side of the town.

## HIGH-QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The growing interest in Calvià as a premium and MICE destination is also evident in new investments. Projects such as the Purobeach Resort Santa Ponsa - Oasis del Mar, with an investment of over 18 million euros, and two new restaurants from the Pajarita Group in Palmanova, will help entice event organisers and high-spending



visitors, consolidating the destination's reputation for offering quality tourism.

The Purobeach hotel, set to open in summer 2025, will feature 160 rooms, a spa and sporting facilities. The Pajarita Group restaurants, which will launch in April/May, will enrich the gastronomic options available in the region with their focus on fresh local produce and stylish settings.

## A DIVERSE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM

Calvià is championing a sustainable and diversified tourism model. The combination of high-quality infrastructure, cultural activities and leisure options makes it an attractive destination for event organisers seeking to enhance the participant experience.

This multidimensional approach both benefits tourists and strengthens the local economy, generating employment and promoting innovation in the range of services on offer. ■



+ info [www.calvia365.com](http://www.calvia365.com)  
info@fundacioncalvia.com



Standing out, facilitating strategic alliances, applying new technological solutions, and ensuring sustainability shape the future of the MICE sector

# EVENTS MUST BE MEMORABLE

In addition to providing valuable content and facilitating networking opportunities, congress and meeting organisers and industry analysts agree: events must be memorable.



Combining work and fun at events helps transform them into experiences.

Among the current trends are personalised experiences, adding more value to business meetings, 'gamification', measurable environmental commitment, and the use of AI assistants that effortlessly improve event efficiency. The industry

is advancing in parallel with increasingly demanding MICE travellers who are better informed and globally connected.

## CONTENT MATTERS

"Events are evolving towards more immersive and meaningful formats, which

undoubtedly enriches the experience for participants", **Spain Convention Bureau** President **Vicent Marí Torres** tells **Hosteltur**, also emphasising a commitment to sustainability as one of the sector's priorities.

Being original, standing out, and encouraging participation are some of the key elements driving professional event organisation today.

## STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Shaking hands is here to stay. After the mandatory pause during the pandemic, face-to-face meetings have regained ground, with companies and organisations prioritising in-person meetings for everything from winning new clients to training and closing major deals.

The 'Business Travel Trends 2024' report produced by **Globetrender** in collaboration with **Cytricleasy by Amadeus**, which analyses the evolution of corporate travel, emphasises the importance of 'power networking' generated by attending events where new connections are made, real professional networks are built, and participants enhance their contact lists.

## THE FUN FACTOR

Bleisure and all the activities that take



The use of AI in diagnostic improvement tools was discussed at the recent XVII Meeting of the Systemic Autoimmune Diseases Group (GEAS) of the Spanish Society of Internal Medicine (SEMI).

place outside the meeting itself are becoming an increasingly important strategy to promote participation and achieve the desired engagement. There's a proliferation of parties, happy hours, lunches, excursions to the countryside, dinners, competitive games, sports tournaments associated with events, all types of team-building activities, and city tours that foster human connection, optimise attendees' time, and contribute both to networking and making events memorable experiences.

Globetrender identifies 'executive field trips' as a trend, where conversations 'over coffee, breaking bread, or around a campfire' proliferate, with an increasingly wide range of 'immersive, surprising, and sometimes even extreme experiences, both domestically and abroad'.

## SUSTAINABLE

Sustainability plays an increasingly im-

portant role in decision-making for business travellers and should be reflected in concrete, measurable objectives and actions. There is growing awareness of the importance of providing sustainable experiences and adopting measures in areas such as pollution and waste reduction, optimisation of energy and water use, and ensuring a positive impact on the local economy. A survey by **Amadeus** among 896 senior executives and decision-makers revealed that 90% of travel companies have a strategy to achieve environmental sustainability goals or planned to implement one in 2024.

## 100% SECURE

A recent **Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE)** study highlights the growing importance of destination security in choosing event locations. As well as safety, business travel and MICE events consider factors such as infrastructure improvements and emergen-

cy response capacity when selecting destinations.

## DIGITAL MANAGEMENT

Technology provides increased convenience and efficiency through new tools that are applicable to almost every area, from improved planning to attendee flow management and impact measurement.

Having an event-specific app is the best way to offer a unique digital experience. It facilitates providing information to attendees, maintaining communication with organisers and between participants, and gives them autonomy to self-manage their time. It also reduces paper usage.

The automation of expense management stands out, with the incorporation of AI (artificial intelligence) in processes, which will increase personalisation and improve user experience while ensuring data security and travel policy compliance. ■



PR

# MICE BY HOTELES ELBA



In the city, amidst the tranquility of a unique resort, or right on the beachfront, at Hoteles Elba they know how to create events, without a doubt. Whether they are customized, themed, or open to collaborations and partners, with the possibility of audiovisuals, simultaneous translation, DJs, animation teams, and entertainment, they are always professional events that leave no one indifferent.

Elba hotels are located in the most important and best-connected tourist and business destinations in the country: Madrid, Mallorca, Motril, Almería, Estepona, Cadiz, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura and Gran Canaria. They have always been able to incorporate modern and technological facilities, free high-speed wi-fi and very high standards of comfort. Now more than ever, the industry is sharing the conviction that corporate

travel adds value, helps close good deals, generates good ideas in work situations and improves working relationships. They are key when it comes to offering a MICE proposal and make the difference.

It is in this favourable environment that the opportunity arises to take advantage of the more than 25 years of experience of the Hoteles Elba chain, independent and fully owned and managed. This feature helps to add flexibility, agility



and enhance any approach that pursues customisation, to create perfect events.

Meeting rooms and outdoor spaces with capacities from 25 to 2,000 people add extra charm to the experience. Meeting rooms with natural light for events, conferences, seminars, company meetings, team buildings, banquets, and other celebrations are the natural habitat for the professional teams of the company.

At Hoteles Elba they know what they are doing. The professional standards with which they work have an impact on the levels of success of the company that hires them and they are capable, in a short time, of transforming each space into an unforgettable setting that pursues and achieves the objectives



that have been set for the event. Variable capacities, up to 2,000 people, expansive gardens, convention centres, a pattern of spacious and highly comfortable rooms, ample on-site parking, grand halls, and top-notch gastronomy – Hoteles Elba offers it all.

In short, maximum comfort and the highest level of service without renouncing the common sense that guides each proposal.

## MICE BY THE SEA. MICE WITH STYLE

In trendy Madrid, on the beachfront or on a breathtaking Mediterranean cliff, Hoteles Elba knows how to create unforgettable events

The strategic location of Madrid Alcalá, with a spectacular convention centre and a unique 1,300 m2 garden, allows us to work with capacities of up to 2,000 attendees just a few minutes from the lfe-



ma exhibition centre and the airport.

In the heart of the Costa del Sol, Elba Estepona, with 204 rooms, mostly with sea view and an iconic thalasso-therapy centre, can accommodate 300 guests simultaneously with spectacular 5-star service.

The blue Mediterranean Sea frames any event at the Elba Sunset Mallorca on a spectacular cliff. Only 20 minutes from Palma, it has spectacular spaces with a maximum capacity of 150 people, indoor parking and a Thalasso Spa area in an exceptional location. ■

**Elba**  
HOTELS RESORTS

+ info [www.hoteleselba.com/es](http://www.hoteleselba.com/es)  
[madrid.sales@hoteleselba.com](mailto:madrid.sales@hoteleselba.com)





Intelligent networking options, gamification, AI and customisable agendas are among the most requested tools from Meetmaps specialists for events

# ESSENTIAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE MICE SECTOR

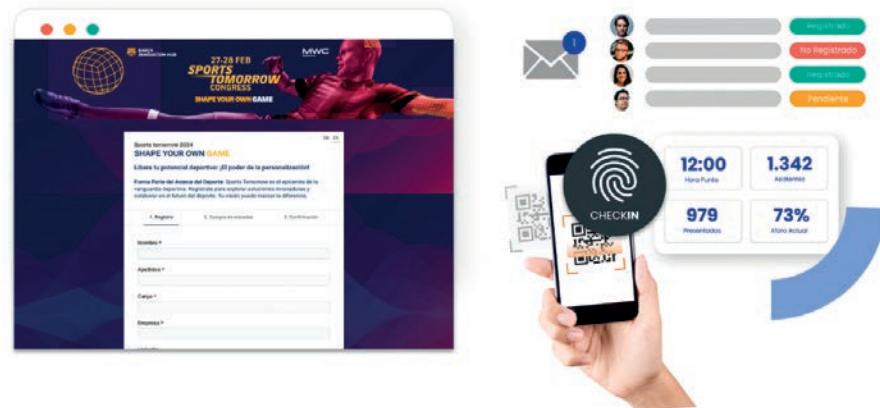
Technology is key to successful event planning in every aspect. It's constantly evolving, with new advances improving both event management and meeting content.

Among the latest event technology trends, artificial intelligence (AI) solutions stand out for personalising interactions, both during and after the event. This includes "virtual assistants, predictive analysis of attendee behaviour, and personalised recommendations based on similar interests and profiles or 'match-making'." **Meetmaps Marketing Director** and co-founder **Cesc Riera** explains to Hosteltur.

## ALL IN ONE

According to Riera, intelligent networking options stand out as the most in-demand tools for the MICE sector, connecting attendees according to their interests and profiles. Others include gamification to make the event more

## Registration and Check-in



Among the tools offered by Meetmap is intelligent networking, which connects event participants according to their interests and profiles.

dynamic and motivating; and live surveys and voting, which allow interactive and real-time participation. And he adds that other requested resources include interactive venue maps and floor plans, along with customisable agendas, allowing attendees to organise their experience autonomously and optimally.

"With so many options, our clients increasingly value being able to being connected to each other through shared technologies, so attendees have a friction-free experience," states the Meetmaps representative, a specialist in Software as a Service (SaaS), which enables precisely that: "managing events from start to finish in one place, with the peace of mind that the technology is pre-

pared to scale and evolve as their needs and the market change".

## INDISPENSABLE

Riera believes that the pandemic was "a catalyst" for digitalisation in the events sector. Since then, the commitment to technology has continued growing and evolving such that organisers now consider technology not as an additional element, but as a fundamental part of their event strategy. He adds that "the possibility of improving attendee experience, increasing engagement and having precise metrics in real-time makes technology indispensable for meeting event objectives". Among the various tools, creating mobile applications for each

event, real-time interaction tools and infrastructure for hybrid events have become standard.

Although in-person events have recovered, there is still demand for hybrid solutions at Meetmaps, explains Riera, because "organisers seek to maximise their events' reach and adapt to new attendee expectations...Our platform allows organisers not only to manage the in-person aspect but also to offer high-quality digital experiences for those who prefer to participate remotely." He explains that this ranges from live session streaming to the ability to interact with in-person attendees, access recorded content and virtual networking tools.

This November, the II National Congress of Experiential Tourism was held in Burgos as a hybrid event. It brought together 53 specialised speakers from across Spain, a total of 127 in-person attendees (the number was reduced owing to the dangerous weather system affecting much of the country during the event) and 1,113 online registrants. As a hybrid event, there was a positive impact on attendance but this type of event also allows for the timings to be extended: This second edition of the event will conclude with a webinar on 26 November to discuss conclusions, and the official website will post news about complementary



The II National Congress of Experiential Tourism was a hybrid event, which increased its impact with ten times more online participants than those who attended in Burgos.

activities to be held throughout the year until the next edition is announced.

## IN HAND

With regard to having a mobile application for the event, the Meetmaps co-founder explains that it offers multiple benefits, because it "centralises all information in one place, allowing attendees to easily access the agenda, floor

plans, exhibitors, speakers and much more; it also facilitates direct communication with attendees through push notifications and personalised messages".

Another key benefit is the ability to provide effective and personalised networking between attendees, enriching their experience and allowing them to build valuable relationships. Finally, it allows organisers to collect real-time data on each user's interaction and journey, "providing valuable insights to optimise future editions," explains Cesc Riera.

## LET'S PLAY

Engagement strategies and gamification have also evolved to become an integral part of today's event design. Riera cites examples ranging from the ability to incorporate personalised challenges and missions, to the use of real-time reward systems and rankings, emphasising that "gamification motivates attendees to actively participate and enjoy the experience more".

"In addition, the use of interactive games and competitions encourages networking and collaboration between attendees, creating a positive and memorable atmosphere. These resources not only increase engagement, but also improve knowledge retention and event impact, ensuring that attendees feel truly involved and connected," concludes the Meetmaps representative. ■



Among other activities, attendees of the II National Congress of Experiential Tourism drove through the Demanda mountain range in Panda cars and visited the Mining Train Railway Museum.



PR

# HOST YOUR EVENTS IN UNIQUE VENUES WITH H10 HOTELS



H10 Atlantic Sunset, Tenerife

H10 Hotels offers a selection of 43 establishments with exclusive spaces for holding meetings and events. All of them have privileged locations, in the city centre or on the seafront, and with their own personality that makes them unique venues for special occasions.

H10 Hotels' establishments stand out for their prime location, fine cuisine, a meticulous interior design carried out in collaboration with renowned studios and high-end facilities with multipurpose spaces, from meeting rooms to magnificent terraces with views and charming spaces where any type of celebration can be held.

Events organised in the chain's hotels are personalised to the needs of each customer, always overseen and guided by a professional team specialised in the MICE sector that will coordinate the event and see to every detail.

The hotel chain promotes a sustainable event organisation experience by applying specific measures from its Stay Green sustainability plan, in order to protect the environment where its establishments are located.



The One Palácio da Anunciada, Lisbon



H10 Palacio Colomera, Córdoba

## IDEAL SPACES FOR HOLDING EVENTS

H10 Hotels offers a wide variety of facilities designed to hold all types of events. From palaces that have been restored while maintaining the essence of the original building, such as The One Palácio da Anunciada in Lisbon, which has unique meeting rooms and exclusive gardens, to emblematic hotels located on the seafront, outstanding among which is the H10 Atlantic Sunset in Tenerife.

Some of the latest highlights include the H10 Palacio Colomera which, after being extended, has incorporated two meeting rooms, making it a magnificent option for holding events and meetings in a privileged location in the centre of Córdoba, in the Plaza de las Tendillas. The hotel now has the Omeya Room, with capacity for up to 60 people and views of a small courtyard with a vertical garden, and the Medina Room, for small meetings of up to 12 people.

The hotel also has two rooftops, perfect for hosting private cocktail-type celebrations, the recently inaugurated El Mirador de Córdoba, with capacity for up to 80 people and 360° views of the city, and the Rooftop 1928, with a spectacular panoramic view over the Plaza de las Tendillas. In addition, the hotel's traditional Cordovan courtyard offers an elegant and welcoming

setting for receptions, welcome drinks and aperitifs in a venue with historic charm.

In Andalusia, the H10 Croma Málaga also stands out, an exclusive hotel located in the city centre with three rooms with natural light, including the 238 m<sup>2</sup> Cubismo Room, which can accommodate up to 200 people. In addition to these spaces, there is a sensational Rooftop that becomes the perfect setting for holding events with the best panoramic views of the city.

All H10 Hotels' establishments have perfectly equipped spaces, state-of-the-art technology and everything you need to ensure the success of your event. All of them can be adapted to the needs of each event, and can host different numbers of attendees and guests in maximum comfort. Particularly notable are the outdoor locations, such as terraces, gardens and rooftops with views that will turn the event into a celebration with an added air of exclusivity.

## ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

H10 Hotels' commitment to contributing to responsible tourism has led it to define a specific strategy in the MICE area in its Stay Green sustainability plan. The actions implemented include single-use plastic-free meetings, a gastronomic proposal based on local products and the use of renewable energy technologies.

Furthermore, other actions being carried out in the area of sustainability include efficient lighting in meeting rooms; providing customers with filtered local water and organic coffee; efficient waste management and efficient control of food waste from buffets and coffee breaks. The chain also encourages its customers and partners to take an active stance by making them aware of sustainable initiatives.

Organising successful and sustainable events in facilities with their personality and unique character is possible with the Meetings & Events proposal of H10 Hotels, with MICE establishments in 22 destinations in Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Portugal and the Caribbean. ◀

• info [mice@h10hotels.com](mailto:mice@h10hotels.com)  
[www.h10hotels.com/en/meetings-incentives-hotels](http://www.h10hotels.com/en/meetings-incentives-hotels)



H10 Cubik, Barcelona



When Being Responsible is No Longer Optional

# NEW EU DIRECTIVE SET TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE EVENTS FORWARD

Taiana **González**

@taianahosteltur



The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive will impact the entire European business landscape. Source: IA/ Adobe Stock

The European Union's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) comes into force in 2025, requiring thousands of companies above certain thresholds to report new ESG metrics and targets (Environmental, Social, and Governance). All departments will need to embrace sustainable practices, prompting a fundamental rethink of how business is conducted. This new directive will indirectly affect the entire European business ecosystem, which must accelerate its sustainable transformation to meet the demands of these large corporations.

**A**udit firm **Grant Thornton** explains that this regulation will be rolled out in phases to approximately 50,000 organisations. Initially, for the 2024 financial year (reporting early 2025), it will apply to entities already reporting under the Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD). Other entities meeting CSRD criteria must report from the 2025 financial year (reporting early 2026), listed SMEs from 2026, and EU-based subsidiaries of third-country companies will fall under the scope in 2028.

For the events industry, this means these 50,000 companies (including 5,500 in Spain) must document and ensure that every aspect of their events – from supply chain to waste management and labour practices – meets sustainability standards and is reported transparently.

As a result, it will become the norm to plan, organise and execute events to minimise negative impact. Industry stakeholders must meet these requirements, as large companies will face additional pressure and seek partners and suppliers who meet specific sustainability standards.

The good news, according to a survey by **Forum Business Travel & Events** in collaboration with **Lufthansa Group**, is that companies increasingly recognise that their ESG policy is crucial for maintaining corporate reputation, noting that “the past decade has seen tremendous progress in implementing sustainability, social responsibility and good governance in the business sector”.

## THE CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Events, trade shows, conferences and incentive trips are strategic business tools used to showcase and launch products, network, strengthen customer relationships and train or motivate employees. With growing environmental awareness, and particularly as a result of increasing regulatory requirements, clients will need to analyse the impact of their energy consumption, carbon emissions, sustainable materials use, and waste management. They will also need to demonstrate efforts to reduce negative footprints.

Spain is a leading international MICE destination, with the sector's turnover expected to reach €15 billion by

**A sustainable event is one that is designed, organised and implemented to minimise negative environmental, social and economic impacts**

the end of 2024 (according to a **Braintrust** report for the **Spain Convention Bureau**). While acknowledging that zero impact is unattainable, many organisers are already implementing environmentally and socially responsible measures to maintain their position in the corporate tourism, trade fair and incentives landscape.

## PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

Many Spanish destinations, associations, and companies have implemented MICE tourism programmes, offering support and guidance to minimise the environmental impact of events in their regions.

The **Catalan Tourist Board** (ACT) and **Catalunya Convention Bu-**



## 8 KEY PRINCIPLES FOR GREEN EVENT PLANNING

To minimise environmental impact, benefit local communities and ensure positive attendee feedback, event organisers must implement sustainable practices throughout all stages of the event.

1. Sustainable, accessible locations: Start by choosing venues – hotels or convention centres – with sustainability certifications such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Choose locations that are accessible by public transport and have natural lighting to reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption.

2. Planning, local and seasonal sourcing: Santiago Quiroga, Quality and CSR Director at IFEMA Madrid, notes that events waste 20-50% of catering products, with buffets a particular problem. He recommends careful planning and choosing local, seasonal produce to reduce transport emissions and support the local economy. Surplus food should be redirected to food banks, foundations or food waste apps that offer discounted prices.

3. Efficient waste management: Events must incorporate recycling, composting, and paper/waste reduction systems. This means choosing venues with responsible waste management facilities, minimising single-use items, prioritising biodegradable tableware, and reusing materials for future events.

4. Transport logistics: Reduce environmental impact by providing group transport, encouraging the use of public transport or promoting low-emission options such as

cycling. Installing charging points for electric vehicles and offering virtual streaming options can further reduce the carbon footprint.

5. Attendee awareness: Inform all stakeholders (attendees, suppliers and sponsors) about the event's sustainable practices to raise awareness and enhance the perception of the event, organisation and brand.

6. Sustainable merchandising and gifts: Choose giveaways that are truly useful, durable and sustainable. Local, fair trade, recycled or biodegradable products are ideal options.

7. Benefit the local community: Create tangible community impact by partnering with local businesses for supplies, donating surplus food, and hiring local staff and suppliers to boost the local economy. Engage participants in social impact activities such as tree planting or restoring public spaces.

8. Impact assessment: Post-event analysis should measure environmental, social and economic impacts. Measuring carbon footprint and waste enables organizations to implement offset programs while identifying areas for improvement in future events.



Measuring the energy consumption and carbon emissions of events will be mandatory. Source: Adobe Stock.

**reau** launched a guide in 2023 with criteria aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for events. It includes a sustainability checklist, an environmental impact calculator, and carbon footprint offsetting guidance.

The **Andalusian Climate Change Office** (OACC) published a 'Protocol for Calculating the Carbon Footprint of Sustainable Events', based on **ISO 20121** standards for improving organisational processes and their execution.

**Madrid Convention Bureau (MCB)** launched PLUS Legacy with US, a digital platform that helps organisers conduct pre-event analysis to make necessary planning changes, minimising impact from the outset and facilitating SDG implementation. They've also developed a guide for local social enterprises, including suggestions for social responsibility. These range from awareness talks with people with intellectual disabilities and autism to jewellery workshops led by



### GALLERY | Barcelona

- Event spaces with a capacity of up to 200 people
- Meeting rooms with natural light
- Spacious outdoor terraces in the heart of the city

[eventos@galleryhoteles.com](mailto:eventos@galleryhoteles.com)  
[galleryhotel.com](http://galleryhotel.com)



### MOLINA LARIO | Málaga

- Event spaces with a capacity of up to 180 people
- Meeting rooms in the historic center
- Amazing terraces overlooking Málaga Cathedral

[convenciones@hotelmolinalario.com](mailto:convenciones@hotelmolinalario.com)  
[hotelmolinalario.com](http://hotelmolinalario.com)



women at risk of social exclusion, native reforestation activities, decorating pyjamas for sick children, and distributing hygiene supplies to vulnerable families.

#### SUCCESS STORY: MWC 2024

The **Mobile World Congress** (MWC) in Barcelona, which is ISO 20121 certified, implemented a comprehensive carbon reduction and waste minimisation plan for the 2024 edition.

In addition to all-digital registration and accreditation to reduce paper, key sustainable measures included low-energy LED lighting, automatic lighting management sensors and renewable energy systems at Fira Barcelona. The organisers promoted environmentally friendly stand design and created a donation room for exhibitors' unwanted furniture, plants and other materials. Attendees received free public transport passes and a 100% electric MWC Direct Bus shuttle service was introduced to minimise fossil fuel consumption.

With a focus on the local economy, they offered zero-kilometre food options with seasonal and organic produce. In terms of waste management, surplus food and service materials were donated to local reuse and donation schemes, with catering suppliers required to follow the same practice.

#### CHALLENGES

Despite this progress, implementing green events still faces several hurdles. One of the main obstacles, especially for SMEs, is the cost associated with best practices, as sustainability often requires higher initial investment in eco-friendly suppliers, recyclable

### Sustainable events not only meet regulatory requirements but enhance brand reputation

materials, and renewable energy.

Another challenge is that not all destinations offer a wide range of sustainable suppliers, and organic products, recycled materials or green transport options can be either scarce or expensive. A third challenge is resistance to change, as some stakeholders still don't see sustainability as a priority. However, this position appears to have an expiry date – those who fail to adapt risk being left behind. ■



Social impact activities at events are becoming increasingly common. Source: Adobe stock.

# LAZARETO MENORCA

## The Perfect Space for Meetings, Incentives, Congresses and Exhibitions



Menorca is making its mark on the MICE sector, and the historic Lazareto de Menorca stands out as the island's premier venue.

The Lazareto, a historic quarantine complex set on a small island in the Port of Maó, stands out for its architectural beauty, unique location and

fascinating history. Now fully restored, it offers a host of modern, exclusive facilities.

This magnificent complex offers a series of versatile spaces and rooms designed to accommodate all types of MICE events.

The Congress Hall, with capacity for 240 people, is a unique, flexible

space. Fully equipped, it provides a spectacular backdrop for conferences, lectures, and presentations.

The Dining Room features a professional kitchen and relaxation area, making it ideal for networking lunches, dinners, and cocktail receptions.

For training sessions and breakout groups, there are nine flexible meeting rooms of various sizes, each fully furnished and equipped with everything required for a successful event.

The crowning glory of the Lazareto is the stunning courtyards and the charming terrace of the café-bar, which exude a magical atmosphere that is perfect for evening events.

Make your next event extraordinary. Choose the Lazareto de Menorca for an unforgettable experience that will exceed all your expectations. The Lazareto de Menorca is the perfect destination. ■



+ info [www.menorca.es/es/LZ\\_MICE/16780](http://www.menorca.es/es/LZ_MICE/16780)



Over 200 trade fairs have been scheduled for the last quarter of 2024

# SPANISH TRADE FAIRS HAVE CONSOLIDATED GROWTH AND ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025 WITH OPTIMISM

Ángeles Vargas

@angelesvargaspe

The upward trend for the trade fair industry continues. The latest data from the **Spanish Fairs Association** (AFE) demonstrates a period of growth across all key indicators in 2023 compared with the previous year. There were a total of 433 exhibitions and trade shows, with 55,200 exhibitors. This represents a 12% increase over the previous year, a 16.1% increase in occupied space, and a 9% increase in visitor numbers, which totalled 6.5 million.

In an interview with **Hosteltur**, the association's **president, Xavier Basañez Llantada**, explained that, "this trend, along with statements from association members and data and press releases published throughout 2024, indicate that the year will end on a similarly positive note, with continued growth in key parameters", adding that, "In the last quarter, we have continued to record high levels of activity, with almost 200 exhibitions scheduled, which demonstrates the

continued interest and confidence that companies, professionals and the public have in trade fairs."

In addition, the AFE saw a 20% increase in its membership, from 34 to 41, in 2024. The organisation, which celebrated its 60th anniversary last May, was responsible for organising 92% of the more than 100 international trade fairs that took place in Spain in 2024.

With regard to 2025, Basañez notes that the potential impact of current armed conflicts in various countries on economic stability cannot be overlooked, which is "particularly relevant for large international fairs due to their global reach. However, despite these challenges, the outlook remains positive, given that the vast majority of fairs are well-established and already scheduled". The organisation believes that this trend will continue: "We expect that 2025 will be as successful as 2024. The number of trade fairs scheduled for next year allows us to make this

statement with total conviction".

**Ifema Madrid**, a member of the organisation, was the leading organiser of trade fairs in 2024 with 45 professional events, 39 of which were international trade fairs, as well as six others promoted by other operators. Madrid led the Spanish provinces with the most international trade fairs with 44% of the market, followed by Barcelona (22%), Valencia (13%), Vizcaya (5%), Seville, Ourense and Pontevedra (3%), Valladolid, Alicante and Zaragoza (2%) and Malaga and Lleida (1%), according to the schedule published by the **Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry** through the **State Secretariat for Trade**.

## INTERNATIONAL MILESTONE FOR THE VALLADOLID TRADE FAIR CENTRE

The **Valladolid Trade Fair Centre** (Feria de Valladolid) made headlines at the end of the year by announcing its first event out-



IFEDI, the Ciudad Real Trade Fair Pavilion, has recently joined the Spanish Fairs Association.

side Spain: the organization of FINE, the International Wine Tourism Fair, in Italy. The president of the executive committee of this trade fair institution, **Víctor Car- amanzana**, explained in the announcement that the agreement signed with Riva del Garda Fierecongressi "marks a milestone in the history of Feria de Valladolid" and follows "in the footsteps of leaders like Fira Barcelona and Ifema, who organize international editions of some of their flagship events".

The director general of **Valladolid Trade Fair Centre, Alberto Alonso**, stated that FINE represents an "ambitious international project" that unites two major economies, Spain and Italy, through a collaboration between two leading trade fair organisations. Furthermore, he emphasised the significance of launching FINE in Spain, the country where wine tourism

originated in Europe. Consequently, the international expansion of FINE will comprise two events in 2025: the inaugural event will take place in Valladolid on 5th and 6th March, with a second event scheduled for Riva del Garda in the autumn.

With regard to other large trade fair centres, the **Barcelona Trade Fair Centre** (Fira de Barcelona) has concluded 2024 with a period of intense activity. The Catalan capital played host to over 100 conferences and trade shows between September and December. Notable among these were 20 events in the medical and technological sectors attracted over 100,000 visitors and took place at the Montjuïc, Gran Via, and Barcelona International Convention Centre (CCIB) venues.

According to the Barcelona trade fair institution, the Fira has celebrated

**"Fortunately, the exhibition sector is currently in excellent shape, and we expect this to continue in the coming years," says the president of the AFE**

over 270 events in the final four months of 2024. This follows a period of intense activity until the month of July, which saw major national and international trade shows in technology, tourism and other sectors, including MWC Barcelona, Alimentaria-Hostelco, Seafood Expo Global, Barcelona Wine Week, B-Travel, and IoT Solutions World Congress. ◀



# WHERE LUXURY MEETS PRODUCTIVITY



At GPRO Valparaiso Palace, every meeting, conference, product launch, or social event combines luxury, productivity, and enjoyment to create an unforgettable experience.

Nine meeting rooms, all filled with natural light and fully equipped with the latest technology, are complemented by a dedicated professional team to ensure that every detail is tailored to perfection. Set against the stunning Mediterranean landscape, your event will unfold in an inspiring and captivating environment.

Spacious, open-plan meeting rooms and versatile outdoor spaces create an ideal setting for presentations and product launches. These are complemented by a wide array of gastronomy options, expansive rooms with spectacular bay views, and a 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> spa designed for pure relaxation. GPRO Valparaiso Palace is truly the ideal venue for your next event.

Bring your ideas to life at GPRO Valparaiso Palace—the perfect stage for your upcoming MICE event. ▶



**50** GPRO  
VALPARAISO PALACE & SPA  
金浦馬略卡東邑國際度假酒店

*Business  
& Events*



GPRO Valparaiso Palace & Spa has all the services you need for a complete MICE experience at the highest level, with 174 rooms, more than 1.000 m<sup>2</sup> divided into 9 fully equipped rooms to host the most exclusive events: conventions, congresses, sporting events, product launches, vehicle tests, film shoots and photo shoots.

Together with its excellent location in Palma, is the perfect choice for large events in private spaces with exclusive treatment, complemented by unique and personalised programmes for each client.

*Sala Mallorca*



*Sala Menorca*



*Sala Ibiza*



*Sala Formentera*



*Sala Génova*



*Sala Porto Pi*



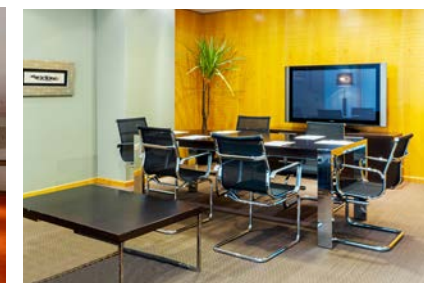
*Sala Sant Agustí*



*Sala Miró*



*Sala Executive*





# CONVENTION CENTRES: A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC DYNAMISM

In 2025, the APCE will celebrate its 30th anniversary, a year that bodes well for the industry

Convention centres contribute significantly to economic and tourism development in Spain. They facilitate the revitalisation of the destination's economy, the creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in seasonality. Furthermore, international events held in these facilities contribute to the promotion of Spain as a leisure and business destination.

**T**he **Spanish Convention Centres Association (APCE)** reported positive results for the year ending 2023, although they were below those achieved in 2022, when they had successfully recovered pre-pandemic figures. Specifically, 4,907 events were held, a decrease from the 5,712 events held in 2022. The total number of attendees was 7,295,593, a decrease from the 7,437,229 attendees recorded in 2022.

A total of 375 congresses, 195 conventions, 1,063 meetings, 1,746 concerts, 51 projections, 34 exhibitions and 195 trade fairs were recorded. In addition, 1,248 other types of events were held. The most popular activities were trade fairs, with 2,822,449 attendees; concerts, with 2,177,024; and congresses, with 451,088.



*Sylvia Andrés, Managing Director of the Valencia Convention Centre (Palacio de Congresos), has been president of the APCE since January 2024.*

## NEW CHALLENGES

The APCE began 2024 with a new president at the helm, Sylvia Andrés, Managing Director of the Valencia Convention Centre, who took over from Iker Goikoetxea, Director-General of the Kursaal and San Sebastian Auditorium. Among the challenges she faces in her term are "actions focused on promoting sustainability, consolidating the economic, social, and environmental contribution that our venues make to society, and creating a common legal framework that allows us to face new challenges," she said.

In addition, the association will continue to focus on training, "since human capital is the best investment of any or-

ganisation," and will continue to hold professional meetings to share successes and learnings as the basis of a continuous improvement process.

## COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

In line with its commitment to sustainability, APCE is conducting surveys among its members to gain insight into their involvement in accessibility, inclusion and social responsibility. The results of the latest Social Sustainability Survey indicate that 93% of the convention centres consider their facilities to be accessible in terms of itineraries, signage and ramps. However, only 47% rate their websites and social networks as accessible. In terms of regu-



FITUR PARTNER



Official Airline



UN Tourism  
AFFILIATE MEMBER



Get your pass  
with discount  
online.

**Proud.  
We are tourism.**

**GO  
TOURISM**

**I ♥ travel**

**22-26  
Jan**

**2025**

**Recinto Ferial  
ifema.es**





lations for the elimination of barriers for people with disabilities, only 20% of the venues have specific regulations in place.

In terms of gender equality, 67% have implemented equality plans and 60% use images reflecting diversity in their promotional campaigns. In addition, 67% of venues work with various NGOs and foundations.

73% of respondents donate surplus materials and 71% have agreements to collect surplus food from local associations. 93% offer professional training programmes and 64% undertake team-building activities to improve the working environment.

Sustainability plays a key role in the collaborative journey undertaken by the APCE and the Spanish Fairs Association (AFE). They have set up working committees and, to focus on specific objectives, are making progress on issues such as sustainability training and self-assessment.

#### JOINT CONGRESS

In July 2023, the APCE and the AFE will hold their second joint congress. After the first edition, which took place in Malaga in 2022, the two associations agreed to



Convention centres are increasingly committed to sustainability and inclusion. Source: Shutterstock

continue to hold this meeting every two years. The last edition was held at the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC) in the capital of the Basque Country and was attended by around 240 participants.

#### CELEBRATING 30 YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY

2025 is a very special year for the APCE as it celebrates its 30th anniversary. The association, which is made up of 33 conference centres, was founded in 1995

with the aim of promoting joint actions designed to enhance the value of these facilities as physical spaces and organisational structures.

To celebrate this anniversary, it is organising a special event in March in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, at the Canary Islands Conference Centre and the Alfredo Kraus Auditorium. The programme will include training sessions and presentations, and the General Assembly will be held during the event. ◀



## Your events in Santiago de Compostela

**Discover the Gran Hotel Los Abetos**, a unique venue crafted for rest and relaxation, surrounded by nature and just minutes from Santiago de Compostela. Boasting a prime location near the historic Monte do Gozo, this hotel offers a perfect combination of comfort and stunning views of the city that is home to the remains of the Apostle Saint James.

Whether you're travelling for leisure, business or completing the pilgrimage route, at the Gran Hotel Los Abetos you'll find comfortable and accessible facilities, **a unique gastronomy experience and a team committed to delivering outstanding customer service.**

For those seeking **a quiet spot to unwind or hold their professional events**, our hotel has spaces equipped for all types of gatherings and celebrations. With natural light and flexible layout options, our meeting rooms guarantee the perfect setting for any occasion: from business meetings, where privacy is essential, to large events with a capacity for up to 500 people.



San Lázaro s/n - 15820 Santiago de Compostela - España | +34 981 557 026 | [www.granhotellosabetos.com](http://www.granhotellosabetos.com) |



# RIOJAforum

PALACIO DE CONGRESOS Y AUDITORIO DE LA RIOJA

## BRING YOUR EVENTS TO LIFE IN LA RIOJA

**Riojaforum:** Where events become unforgettable experiences



**Riojaforum**

Calle San Millán 25, 26004. Logroño, La Rioja, Spain.  
T. (+34) 941 276 200 • [riojaforum@riojaforum.com](mailto:riojaforum@riojaforum.com)

**La Rioja**



Matilde Almandoz, President of **OPC Spain**

## “THE SECTOR HAS FOCUSED ON EXPERIENCE AND ADDING VALUE TO MEETINGS”

After recovering comprehensively last year, this year has been positive for PCOs [Professional Conference Organisers], whose main challenge is enhancing the experience and added value for end users whilst maintaining high-quality content”, explains **Matilde Almandoz, President of the PCO Spain Federation (OPC España)**



### **H**ow was conference activity in Spain in 2023, the most recent full financial year?

2023 saw the complete recovery of activity in the professional meetings sector: conferences, seminars, forums, meetings and congresses – different formats which share the common denominator of knowledge transfer.

### **To what extent would you say conference activity has grown, given that regularly occurring business meetings have recovered and new ones have been incorporated,?**

Conference activity has not only recovered quantitatively but is growing qualitatively and expanding into new sectors. The

### **“Conference activity has not only recovered quantitatively but is growing qualitatively and expanding into new sectors”**

development of these sectors requires tools that promote communication, knowledge transfer and user experience.

### **Which economic sectors are the most active?**

As well as the healthcare and medical sectors, the technology sector in all its variants has seen tremendous growth. We

should also note the significant development of MICE in other areas such as social purposes and the non-profit/NGO sector.

### **For PCOs, are major events that reinforce Spain’s brand image more important than medium-sized events, which ultimately form the bulk of activity?**

Major events set standards and trends. If I may draw an analogy, they’re rather like fashion shows: they inspire, captivate, bring significant resources and generate prestige, brand recognition and inspiration. Day-to-day activities are made up of professional meetings of various types with ever more diverse formats, responding to users who increasingly value in-person professional encounters.



### **How is 2024 proving for PCOs?**

2024 has been positive overall. Whilst there have been some quieter periods, these have quickly been followed by peaks. This pattern appears to have become established in the sector.

### **Is geopolitical uncertainty affecting the conference sector? Would you say it affects Spain more or less than other destinations?**

The uncertainty that loomed over the sector with the onset of the Ukraine war and continues with the situation in Gaza and the Middle East is impacting activity, although we don’t have data to determine whether we are affected more or less than comparable destinations in our region such as France or Italy.

### **What trends and new demands were highlighted at the 37th PCO Congress?**

The 37th PCO Congress, held in A Coruña and organised by PCO Galicia, focused on analysing the sector from a holistic perspective, in order to gain a comprehensive, 360-degree view of conferences and their transformative capacity. We’re now preparing for the 38th Congress, which

will be hosted by OPCE Basque Country in Vitoria-Gasteiz in February and will focus on the human factor – which is the raison d’être and recipient of any knowledge transfer. We’re talking about experience, and let’s not forget that experience is human.

### **After the impact of the pandemic and the resultant explosion in the widespread use of technology, what weight would you say that hybrid and online-only events currently have?**

During and after the pandemic, PCO Spain maintained that the real added value of technological advancement was the expansion of audiences and democratisation of participation, but that the differential value would always lie in face-to-face interaction. Today we can reiterate this message. Hybrid events address specific needs that existed before the pandemic and continue to exist today, now implemented with very advanced technology. Many are face-to-face events with a virtual version to expand and retain audiences. Virtual-only events are well suited to brief thematic sessions addressing specific needs and internal corporate follow-up meetings.

### **“Major events set standards and trends, captivate audiences, bring significant resources and generate prestige, brand recognition and inspiration.”**

### **What challenges does the sector face?**

The sector has focused on experience and adding value for the end user whilst maintaining the highest quality content, which remains the fundamental purpose of professional meetings.

### **What is the outlook for 2025?**

2025 looks positive, with a return to normal activity. However, the pandemic and all the surrounding drama left a specific ingredient among us: uncertainty, although for now it is more cautious reflection than reality. ■



## Experiences that inspire

# JUMBO TOURS

### YOUR STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR MICE



**M**ICE tourism has firmly established itself as a vital sector of the economy, fostering connections, promoting the exchange of ideas, and strengthening business relationships. In this dynamic landscape, Jumbo Tours stands out with its strategic vision, extensive global experience, and commitment to innovation, positioning itself as a leader in the planning and management of unforgettable experiences. They are the essential partner for any organization looking to execute successful events.

With nearly 50 years of expertise, Jumbo Tours delivers comprehensive solutions, tailored to the unique needs of each client. Collaborating closely with their clients, Jumbo Tours meticulously craft each project to fully understand their client's objectives, culture, and priorities.

Jumbo Tours strength lies in its robust global network and deep local knowledge of the diverse destinations the company represents. Boasting a team that consists of over 400 professionals worldwide, each of whom brings a wealth of multicultural experience to the table.

#### COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

At Jumbo Tours, sustainability is a fundamental pillar in the MICE sector. Jumbo Tours prioritize partnerships with local suppliers who embrace sustainable prac-

tices, advocate for events free from single-use plastics, and encourage the use of biodegradable materials. Furthermore, both Jumbo Tours Spain and Jumbo Tours Canary Islands have achieved carbon footprint verification.

#### TOP DESTINATIONS

Jumbo Tours boasts offices in over 35 destinations across 18 countries. Among their most sought-after locations are:

- Spain and Portugal: Cities like Barcelona, Madrid, and Lisbon feature world-class infrastructures, modern convention centers, and exceptional cultural and gastronomic experiences. The Algarve and Costa del Sol provide idyllic settings for meetings and incentives.
- Balearic Islands: Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Formentera are perfect for outdoor events.
- Canary Islands: Tenerife, Gran Canaria, and Lanzarote are renowned for their capacity to host congresses and meetings, complemented by unique activities.
- Morocco: With a modern and efficient events infrastructure, cities like Marrakech, Casablanca, and Fez provide a captivating blend of tradition and modernity.
- Caribbean: The Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Cancun feature world-class resorts, and convention centers.



### AMADEO FRANQUET, COMMERCIAL & MARKETING DIRECTOR OF JUMBO TOURS

#### What sets Jumbo Tours apart from its competitors?

*We strive to be more than just a service provider; our goal is to become a strategic partner for our clients. Our approach centers on personalizing each project, adapting to the needs of event organizers.*

#### What new trends do you see in MICE tourism?

*We're witnessing a growing demand for sustainable and customized events, along with the integration of technology to enhance planning and execution without sacrificing the human touch.*

#### How do you envision the future of the sector?

*The future will be characterized by a blend of hybrid and in-person events.*

#### What would you say to event organizers who haven't yet worked with your company?

*We are the ideal partner to transform their ideas into reality. We are ready to understand their needs, exceed their expectations, and ensure the success of their events.*



# ELEVATING INNOVATION, QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN MICE TOURISM

As your ideal partner, Jumbo Tours delivers interactive and unforgettable experiences across **more than 35 destinations**. By **prioritizing sustainability, technology, and innovation**, we revolutionize MICE tourism, enabling you to provide solutions that resonate with your agency's values and meet the expectations of tomorrow's travelers.

Fully tailored and customised experience

Team of over 400 experts around the world

Driving sustainability through collaboration with local suppliers

Key destinations in Europe, North Africa, the Caribbean, North America and South America, with access to top tourist attractions



Travel managers fulfil a strategic function that will continue to expand in an ever-changing business ecosystem

# BUSINESS TRAVEL TAKES OFF STRONGLY, CREATING NEW CHALLENGES FOR TRAVEL MANAGERS

The business travel sector remains robust with a positive outlook for 2025. Companies expect 2.4% growth in the new financial year, whilst corporate travel budgets are set to increase by 3.6%, according to the first edition of the 'Business Travel Monitor in Spain' by the **Spanish Association of Corporate Travel Managers (AEGVE)**.

The meetings industry generates €14 billion annually in the Spanish outbound market –almost half of the €30 billion leisure travel market. Specifically, in 2023 it recorded €13.367 billion, an increase of 8.5% on 2019, and could reach €14.844 billion by the end of 2024, according to consultancy firm **Braintrust**. If the current trend continues, under moderate projections, the market is expected to reach €15.2 billion by 2025, with the po-

tential to hit €15.6 billion in a best-case scenario, according to a 2019 joint study by the consultancy and **Gebta**, the business travel agency association.

## BUDGET GROWTH

Budgets allocated to meetings and events organisations are set to increase in 2025, according to the **American Express Global Business Travel (Amex GBT)** industry forecast for MICE and business travel for 2025. Of the 500 pro-

fessionals it surveyed worldwide, 66% agreed that budgets would be increased in the coming year.

## KEY REQUIREMENTS

AEGVE's new study, published in October 2024, was conducted by Braintrust with the participation of over 200 companies across the Spanish business environment. It details that securing better prices and rates to support business dynamism is key for 85.5% of travel managers



Business travel has a direct impact on commercial growth and exports. Source: Shutterstock.

surveyed. For 68.7%, saving time and resources is essential, whilst guaranteeing service, security and traveller comfort is a priority for 62.3%. Additionally, sustainability is an important factor for one in five companies.

The analysis indicates that business travel will continue to be oriented around the concept of the four 'Ps': purpose, people, profit & planet. Two additional variables will be added: partnerships & progress.

## MORE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

The Amex GBT report shows that sustainability remains a priority. For 54% of planners, it is "extremely or very important"; 48% have already implemented sustainable policies in their MICE operations and 86% have incorporated DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) measures.

Consistent with this increased concern for sustainability, rail travel is gaining popularity among these travel-

lers. 55% of workers choose this mode as their regular transport for domestic journeys, although they also frequently opt for air travel (71%).

Until October 2024, 65% of domestic business trips were made by rail, compared to 35% by air, based on bookings made through **TravelPerk**, a specialised online business travel platform, and the results of a survey of 1,000 Spanish business travellers.

## CHALLENGES FOR TRAVEL MANAGERS

The business travel sector is part of an ecosystem that will continue to evolve in order to adapt to new times, according to **Ángel García Butragueño, Consulting Director at Braintrust**, who asserts that "travel managers have a key function that will continue to expand over time". It is therefore essential that they "elevate their capabilities and knowledge, which will place them in an

extremely important role within their companies. They will be expected to ensure economic sustainability of the model, the impact of travel on the environment, and the influence of social sustainability on activity," he adds.

A survey by **SAP Concur**, which provides integrated travel management solutions, conducted among almost 4,000 corporate travellers across 24 markets, makes it clear that the main challenges impact travellers but also those who manage their travel. It indicates that travel managers face new challenges globally: it is increasingly difficult to manage demand for flexible, sustainable options and reduce costs. Additionally, one third consider their role has become more strategic, although they don't always have the necessary training. Another third state that companies demand more sustainable options but do not allocate sufficient budget for this. ■



# WELCOMEBEDS FIRMLY COMMITS TO ITS NEW CORPORATE BUSINESS LINE

Eva Bermúdez, Corporate Business Development Director

## Can you explain to us what Welcomebeds' new corporate business unit consists of?

Welcomebeds has an extensive network of partner agencies and a diversified portfolio of services covering multiple client profiles. We saw a significant opportunity for expansion in the corporate segment, which led the general management to establish a specific business unit within the bed bank. The objective of this initiative is to identify key areas for improvement and to develop a differentiated value proposition to meet the needs of business travel. Furthermore, being part of Ávoris Corporación Empresarial, having the backing of BCD Travel, the largest corporate travel agency in the Iberian Peninsula, gives us a strategic advantage, providing us with a solid base of experience in the sector that strengthens this offer.

## You talk about a value proposition; can you give us more details?

Our value proposition is based on two essential pillars: product and service, both firmly backed by technology. On the product side, in addition to establishing direct agreements with the main urban hotel chains, we have incorporated exclusive corporate rates and optimised conditions for non-refundable rates, facilitating maximum flexibility in bookings. We also ensure amenities and services provided by the hotel within that corporate rate (breakfast included, parking, late check out, etc.), as part of our offer, designed to meet the expectations of the corporate client. In terms of service, we have implemented an exclusive and specialised booking system that caters only to corporate travel agencies. This allows us to respond quickly and accurately, an essential feature in the business travel environment.

## How these new features you are introducing have been received?

The reception has been incredibly positive. We are seeing that our approach is



generating tangible results and that corporate agencies value having an accommodation provider that understands the specificity of this segment and can adapt to their daily requirements. This has facilitated the signing of strategic agreements with large management groups and travel agencies that are choosing us as their preferred partner for their business travel needs. On the other hand, the response from our hotel partners has been excellent, allowing us to offer their availability on a preferential basis to this corporate sector.

## What is the intended scope of the project?

In this initial phase, our focus is to consolidate coverage throughout national territory in Spain, as well as in Portugal. From here, we are working on plans for the internationalisation of our offer.

Currently, the corporate segment represents 20% of Welcomebeds' turnover and we are looking to increase this figure in a sustained manner. Our goal is to strengthen our value proposition and position it as a benchmark in the business travel sector.

## Are you working on more projects to boost business travel within Welcomebeds?

At Welcomebeds we maintain a constant focus on innovation. Currently, we are developing several projects, such as the integration of a chat system to facilitate direct and efficient communication with agencies. We are also progressing in the integration of additional platforms that will allow us to manage corporate rates and negotiated rates in a more agile way, thus optimising our proposal for the corporate sector. ◀

welcomebeds.com  
corporate

# MICE

A new vision of corporate travel that promotes business travel

We offer you an exceptional service

We organize your business trips according to your needs

What do we offer?

- ✓ Specialized team with exclusive dedication
- ✓ Service Level Agreement of suppliers
- ✓ Corporate rates
- ✓ Multichannel connectivity: WEB, API, OBT's



An upward trend

# HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS EMBRACE THE MICE MARKET

Event organisers respond to bleisure demands while destinations seek to reduce seasonality

Vivi Hinojosa

@vivi\_hinojosa

The MICE tourism sector has seen remarkable growth in recent years, driven by the increasing importance of business networking, particularly in the post-pandemic era. Predictions that online meetings would permanently replace traditional gatherings proved unfounded; instead, face-to-face events have emerged stronger than ever. This has led to a diversification of destinations, with many organisers looking beyond major cities, although the choice of location obviously depends on the size of the event. The rising trend of bleisure has played a significant role in the growing interest in traditionally leisure-focused destinations that are well-equipped to host meetings and events. Hotels have been quick to recognise and adapt to this shift.

Another factor reshaping the future of MICE tourism is the generational shift in business leadership, with millennials and Generation Z professionals taking the helm of companies and organisations. These new generations, who value personal interaction and continuous learning, are driving increased demand for corporate travel and face-to-face events — a trend that destinations and hotels are keen to accommodate.

As digital natives, they employ technological tools to optimise event organisation and enhance participant experiences, while simultaneously influencing how conferences evolve, with greater emphasis on sustainability, wellness and personalised experiences.

Hotel chains like **Meliá Hotels International** are responding to this new

**Hotels in holiday destinations are offering a wide range of complementary activities to enhance the MICE experience**

demand with specific programmes for business travellers, adapting their offerings with personalised benefits that reflect the priorities of companies led by these young executives. These benefits focus on achieving the work-life balance so valued by newer generations, going beyond preferential rates to offer additional services such as points accumulation for personal getaways and enhanced stays.

## **BENEFITS OF MICE FOR HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS**

Seaside destinations are well aware of the advantages of investing in MICE tourism. According to **Alicante's Tourism Councillor, Ana Poquet**, this segment "delivers significant economic impact and plays a crucial role in reducing tourism seasonality". The **mayor of Castellón, Begoña Carrasco**, highlights "its contribution to boosting the local economy, creating new peaks of activity even in low season".

**Carmen Antón, President of the Murcia Congress Office Business Association**, emphasises its importance "for its high added value and sustainable approach". She adds, "MICE clients are environmentally conscious, generate substantial economic impact, and are interested in exploring their host



city, making it essential to promote practices that benefit the local economy”.

**Lope Afonso, Vice President and Tourism Councillor for the Council of Tenerife**, describes this segment as “profitable, aligned with the destination’s strategy to diversify activities, and generating significant revenue for the island, given visitors’ high spending propensity – typically three to four times that of leisure tourists”.

He adds that “MICE tourism impacts various productive sectors beyond tourism, such as restaurants, translation services and exhibition stand construction, while also positioning Tenerife as a knowledge exchange hub”.

#### DEVELOPMENT IN EMERGING MICE DESTINATIONS

In light of all this, many holiday destinations are actively pursuing this lucrative market segment to capitalise on these advantages, with their hotel offerings playing a crucial role in positioning.

**Valencia** exemplifies this trend, having experienced significant growth in its accommodation options, from luxury establishments to more economical choices, enabling it to host larger numbers of visitors and offer various alternatives to suit different budgets. This is complemented by improved flight

connectivity with domestic and international destinations, alongside extensive event infrastructure.

**Málaga** has also emerged as a rising MICE destination, becoming an international reference point thanks to its modern infrastructure, comprehensive range of hotels and event spaces, and excellent connectivity. It’s also positioning itself as Spain’s answer to Silicon Valley, attracting technology investments and, consequently, professionals and companies seeking to establish themselves in a dynamic, promising environment.

**Tenerife** highlights its more than 60,000 hotel beds in 4- and 5-star establishments, excellent connectivity with direct regular flights to almost 150 destinations (making it the best connected of the Canary Islands), and five congress centres. The island also boasts a variety of unique meeting venues and numerous natural areas for visits and excursions.

**Cádiz** prides itself on having over 50 hotels equipped with facilities and services for such events, along with significant conference infrastructure, including congress centres in several of the province’s major cities.

In **Lloret de Mar**, one of Girona province’s primary MICE tourism destinations, the focus is on, as **Lloret Convention Bureau Director Montse Be-**

**lisario** explains, “offering activities that make sense here and nowhere else... This differentiates us and adds value – unique experiences that highlight Lloret’s distinctive characteristics, such as organising *llagut regattas* [traditional light sailing vessels] for team building,” she explains. This diversity of offerings, combined with the municipality’s high-quality hotels, has driven exponential growth in corporate events in recent years.

#### EVOLUTION IN IBIZA

Even destinations known predominantly for leisure like Ibiza are embracing this segment for its role in reducing seasonality and high average spending. The island’s **Tourism Director, Juan Miguel Costa**, notes that visitors attending meetings while “discovering the island through activities and cultural heritage often return later with family or friends”. This has led to “the development of infrastructure and industry around this segment”, he explains. Current hotel renovations are “almost universally incorporating areas designed to serve these types of tourists”.

Infrastructure development has been key to the segment’s growth and will be essential for its future development. As Costa indicates, MICE is one of the clearest growth drivers identified









Ibiza is establishing itself as a MICE destination thanks to what the island’s Tourism Director, Juan Miguel Costa, describes as “its attractions beyond sun, sea and nightlife”. Pictured: The Congress Centre in Santa Eulalia.



## THE PERFECT PLACE FOR YOUR *events*

Discover this fabulous 4-star superior hotel located in the heart of Lloret de Mar

#### HIGHLIGHTED FEATURES

-  **411 ROOMS**  
Standard | Superior | Suite (of which 315 Twins)
-  **10 MEETING ROOMS**  
Plenary room with natural light (The Circus)  
7 Studio breakout rooms + Foyer | Rooftop (The Eighth)
-  **3 RESTAURANTS**  
La Plaza (Buffet) | The Factory (A la carte theme)  
The Eighth (Rooftop restaurant-bar)
-  **BARS**  
La Vinya (Tapas Bar) | Azure Pool Bar
-  **SPA (+16)**  
Wellness pools | Heated pool Sauna | Treatments
-  **GYM**  
Full gym and Bikestation fitness area with special equipment for cyclists
-  **LOCATION**  
Surrounded by sports facilities and 8 minutes walk from the beach

#### WIDE VARIETY OF SPACES

Total area: 1,300m<sup>2</sup>  
Plenary Meeting Room: 700m<sup>2</sup>  
Banquet set-up: 350 pax  
Cocktail set-up: 450 pax  
Theater set-up: 450 pax  
Exterior surface: 1,000m<sup>2</sup>  
Number of Meeting Rooms:  
10+15  
15 Suites convertible in breakout rooms



www.lazure-hotel.com  
mice@lazure-hotel.com  
phone: +34 972 364 658  
Lloret de Mar | Girona





Meliá is expanding into new destinations such as Albania, offering unique experiences to appeal to the new generation of professionals entering the workforce who are seeking something different.

in their marketing plan: "In discussions with the sector, it's one of the best-positioned tourism products and is expected to deliver significant results in coming years". This will be supported by the second phase of the Congress Centre in Santa Eulària, where breaking ground is planned for January, as well as specialist staff training in both public and private centres.

The **Tourism Director** emphasises that Ibiza is ideal for large companies seeking alternatives to major cities: "Getting around the island is straightforward, distances are very short — which is very attractive for event promoters. The island has a powerful tourism brand that appeals to various sectors, including MICE".

**Can Lluç**, an agritourism establishment, exemplifies this by highlighting "the island's year-round Mediterranean climate and blend of modern and traditional elements, making Ibiza ideal for

meetings, events, and corporate groups". Can Lluç aims to "capitalise on this trend by positioning itself as the perfect venue for combining work and relaxation in an exclusive setting".

With 25 rooms, including rural rooms, villas, and suites, all designed to provide comfort and luxury in a countryside setting, it also features modern meeting rooms with advanced technology and outdoor spaces surrounded by nature. Can Lluç provides the perfect setting for presentations, workshops, and team-building activities.

Located 20 minutes from the airport and close to the island's main attractions, it allows corporate groups to enjoy countryside tranquillity without sacrificing accessibility. It offers a wide range of additional services including projectors, screens, and high-speed WiFi, ensuring seamless experiences. Can Lluç also features a wellness area with sauna and massage facilities, as well

### Corporate events are increasingly focusing on sustainability, wellness, and personalised experiences – areas where hotels can make a significant impact

as a gym and outdoor spaces that can be used for relaxation or exercise, complementing professional activities with personal wellbeing.

This is just one example of the increasing number of holiday hotels are adapting their services and facilities to cater to this profitable segment. ■

# ELEVATE YOUR EVENTS WITH RIU PLAZA HOTELS



## RIU PLAZA GUADALAJARA, MEXICO

At Riu Plaza Guadalajara, every detail is meticulously crafted to meet the needs of discerning professionals. Our 16 meeting rooms can host over 1,300 attendees and are equipped with state-of-the-art technology—ideal for any corporate or professional event. Strategically situated near major tourist attractions, the hotel allows you to balance work and leisure seamlessly.

## RIU PLAZA PANAMA, PANAMA CITY

Experience the perfect blend of social and corporate events at Hotel Riu Plaza Panama. With 23 conference rooms equipped to accommodate more than 1,300 guests and featuring cutting-edge audiovisual technology, each event is guaranteed success. Enjoy comfort and efficiency in our business center while being surrounded by top attractions and shopping centers like the exclusive Soho Mall just 250 meters away.

Choose Riu Plaza Hotels for your next event and ensure an extraordinary experience that combines elegance with unrivalled convenience. Contact us today to plan your unforgettable gathering!

Step into a world of joy and sophistication with Rooftop Bar events by Riu! Transform your MICE gatherings into unforgettable experiences surrounded by breathtaking views. Picture your guests being wowed from the top of a chic rooftop bar, where the trendy atmosphere is matched only by an exquisite selection of cocktails and drinks. With expansive spaces and stunning vistas of iconic cities like Guadalajara, Madrid, or Chicago, every meeting becomes a memorable occasion.

For those seeking a thrill, our glass balcony offers a unique perspective that will leave everyone speechless. Discover unparalleled hospitality where business meets pleasure in perfect harmony at the heart of the world's most iconic cities. Book this extraordinary space now and experience the perfect balance between work and leisure with Riu Plaza Hotels. Let the joy begin! ■

**+ info** [sales.pan@riu.com](mailto:sales.pan@riu.com)  
[events.gld@riu.com](mailto:events.gld@riu.com)  
[events.madrid@riu.com](mailto:events.madrid@riu.com)

At Riu Plaza Hotels, we are thrilled to offer you the utmost comfort and convenience to ensure the success of your events. Our extensive range of meeting hotels is perfect for making your gatherings and group stays truly memorable.

## PRIME LOCATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Choose from our stunning destinations including Guadalajara, Panama, Madrid, Dublin, and San Francisco. Each hotel is strategically located in prime cities worldwide, providing unbeatable access to local attractions and cultural hotspots.

Our elegantly designed venues combine style with functionality, creating the perfect ambiance for your meetings and events. Whether it's a corporate conference or a grand celebration, Riu Plaza Hotels has you covered.

## YOUR EVENT, OUR EXPERTISE

Experience seamless planning and execution with our dedicated team of professionals who are committed to making your event a resounding success. Let us handle the details while you focus on what matters most—creating unforgettable memories.

Discover unparalleled venues for your most exclusive meetings and events

at Riu Plaza Hotels, where sophistication meets convenience.

## RIU PLAZA ESPAÑA, MADRID

Located in the heart of Madrid on the iconic Gran Vía, the Hotel Riu Plaza España offers an exceptional setting for your gatherings. With 17 meeting rooms accommodating up to 1,500 guests, every event becomes a memorable occasion. Imagine hosting on the breathtaking 27th-floor terrace, providing unmatched views for unique experiences. Its prime location ensures easy access to all vibrant city corners.





Venues defined by originality, innovation and sustainability

# SPANISH DESTINATIONS UNVEIL UNIQUE NEW VENUES FOR EVENTS

Diana **Ramón Vilarasau**

@dianaramonv



Sala Tables in the cupola of the Hyatt Regency Barcelona Tower.

Companies increasingly seek to inject innovation and originality into their events, making the choice of venue crucial. Spanish destinations offer unique spaces that stand out for their aesthetic appeal and distinctive character, equipped with the necessary technology for meetings while offering diverse possibilities to create ex-

clusive experiences. Gala dinners, institutional events, brand launches, pop-up stores, showrooms and team-building activities take on a new dimension in these remarkable settings.

## PURE SUSTAINABILITY

Located in the heart of Madrid's Paseo de la Castellana, **Espacio KOI** is a new train-

ing and events building designed with sustainability at its core. Created by the internationally acclaimed architectural firm Ortiz y León, KOI sets new standards in energy efficiency and environmental quality, having achieved LEED Platinum certification – guaranteeing energy, water and resource conservation while minimising waste. With a maximum ca-



Barcelona Olympic Port marina view (Photo: dronepicr).

capacity of 300 people (250 in its main hall), its spaces are uniquely timeless, offering tranquil, harmonious surroundings for exceptional experiences.

## SOPHISTICATION IN THE HEART OF MADRID

The events scene in Madrid has a new epicentre in the Salamanca district, where exclusivity meets entertainment. **Gabana Music Club** has been reborn at a new location on Calle María de Molina 39. Accommodating up to 1,000 people, with an 800-person main hall and 300m<sup>2</sup> outdoor space, it features private parking with direct venue access, catering services, and start-of-the-art audio-visual technology.

## A COUNTRYSIDE WEDDING VENUE OPENS FOR EVENTS

Just 20 kilometres from Barcelona, on the Granollers-Masnou road at kilometre 10.5 in Vilanova del Vallès, the **Mas de Sant Lleí** is a traditional wedding venue that has opened its 40-hectare estate

## New venues in Madrid, Barcelona and Seville join the congress tourism portfolio

for corporate and institutional events. The property features in-house catering, extensive gardens, private woodland, two helipads and parking facilities. Dating back to the 12th century, this beautiful estate's magical atmosphere combined with personalised service ensures memorable events for up to 900 guests.

## EVENTS IN A PICTURESQUE MARKET

The **Mercado Lonja del Barranco**, a magnificently restored 19th-century former market in Seville, is a distinctive new venue, strategically located for smaller events incorporating gastronomic and cultural elements. The space has become a must-visit destination in the Andalusian capital. With a maximum

capacity of 100 people, this versatile, fully-equipped venue spans two floors across 1,200m<sup>2</sup> and houses 20 prestigious food establishments.

## BETWEEN STADIUM AND CITY

Madrid's newest venue is the **SkyBar Bernabéu**, a premium VIP box in the iconic **Santiago Bernabéu stadium**. Located on the majestic Skywalk that encircles Real Madrid's new stadium, this sophisticated 200-person capacity space features avant-garde design and is poised to become a global reference point. Offering views over both Madrid and the pitch, SkyBar Bernabéu delivers luxury experiences with state-of-the-art technology and high-end gastronomy.

## A FRESH APPROACH TO EVENTS

Last July, **Barcelona's New Olympic Port** – host to sailing competitions during the 1992 Olympics and an iconic element of the city's skyline – reopened after four years of renovation. The re-designed space now offers 20,000m<sup>2</sup>



dedicated to the blue economy, nautical activities, gastronomy and events. Notable additions include Moll de Mestral, transformed into an immense 8,000m<sup>2</sup> plaza replacing former terraces and nightclubs, and the Gastronomic Balcony on Moll de Gregal, which connects the waterfront promenade with the sea.

The New Olympic Port features ten event spaces of varying sizes, from the 2,433m<sup>2</sup> Esplanada Mestral/Gregal to the 600m<sup>2</sup> Àrea Recer/Marina, the 361m<sup>2</sup> Espacio Mestral conference room, and the 110m<sup>2</sup> Sala Gregal.

RACING TOWARDS EVENTS

The **Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Montmeló**, 30 minutes from Barcelona, is a multifunctional venue adaptable to businesses of all sizes. Its facilities are equipped for any event type, with the advantage of a unique high-impact setting associated with premier motorsport.

All its spaces are available for rent, including the Privilege Corner, a two-storey 435m<sup>2</sup> building set in 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of greenery, suitable for both indoor and outdoor events, with an upper terrace offering 360-degree circuit views.

The Crystal Palace is a modern space with abundant natural light, while the Boxes Building houses options with differing capacities. Other facilities in-



Cristal Palace, a space with natural light in the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya (Foto: Ank kumar).

clude: the Boxes; the Corporate Lounge (Pis Box); the Montjuic Club (Pis Box Member); the Briefing Room (165m<sup>2</sup>); the 450-seat Press Room; the Control Tower with VIP rooms (170m<sup>2</sup>) and the Panoramic Room; customisable Suites in the main grandstand; the Paddock (with more than 30,000m<sup>2</sup>); the Principal Stand Space, with an outside area of more than 7,000m<sup>2</sup>; and the Stadium

Zone, which also offers an outside area of more than 5,000m<sup>2</sup>.

EVENTS AMONG THE STARS

The **Fabra Observatory**, built in 1904 and still boasting its original telescope, is one of Barcelona's most iconic venues. Located on Tibidabo mountain, 12.7km from the city centre, it offers opportunities for observing the stars and spectacular 360-degree views of the city and sea. This unique corporate and social event space features audio systems for presentations and conferences, with the city providing a dramatic backdrop.

The venue comprises two main areas: an outdoor terrace accommodating up to 250 people for cocktail events, and the Modernista Hall for up to 50 guests. It also features garden areas for receptions and private parking.

The **Skyfall Cocktail Club at Hyatt Regency Barcelona Tower** offers uninterrupted 360-degree views of Barcelona and its surroundings from its 105-metre-high dome. This distinctive steel and glass creation, designed by architect **Richard Rogers** and local firm **Alonso i Balaguer**, measures 24 metres in diameter with 219 glass panels. It features cutting-edge audio-visual technology, including over 60 Sféar three-dimensional surround sound points and 1,000 LED lights. ◀



The Fabra Observatory and Barcelona viewed from Tibidabo amusement park (Photo: Enric/Wikipedia Commons).

# EVENIA HOTELS

Evenia Hotels is a chain with more than 50 years of experience and offers hotels located in Spain, Portugal, Andorra and Panama. Our hotels have excellent facilities for business.

At Evenia Hotels & Congress Center \*\*\* you can hold events for up to 2,000 people simultaneously.

It has 15 meeting rooms ranging from 76m<sup>2</sup> to 833m<sup>2</sup> with a capacity of about 4,000m<sup>2</sup> of meeting space.

The complex consists of 793 rooms, 326 of them specially designed for meetings.

<b>Capacity Total area</b>	35,000m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Living area</b>	833m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Available outdoor area</b>	4,000m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Banquet format</b>	450 pax
<b>Cocktail format</b>	1,000 pax
<b>Theatre format</b>	770 pax
<b>Number of rooms</b>	15



EVENTS WE HAVE HELD:

- XVI congress Triveneto - 400 italian delegates from the hydrothermal sector.
- International bloggers congress TBEX Catalunya - Costa Brava - 600 delegates.
- Annual Fokus convention - 550 danish and swedish managers.
- Maternal-Fetal medicine congress - 330 delegates.
- International radikal championship darts - 3.000 participants.
- International master of mus - 800 participants.
- V national scientific conference FETESS - 150 delegates.
- Easypark international convention 2022 - 800 delegates.
- International Kellydely convention 2022 - 200 delegates.
- International convention Force Point 2023 - 350 delegates



+info Karolina Saizar  
tel: +34 608 839 745  
congress@eveniahotels.com  
es.eveniahotels.com/eventos  
Av. Rieral 55  
Lloret de Mar, Girona



The MICE segment accounts for nearly 19% of total tourism in the Catalan capital

# Barcelona’s MICE sector grows 17.6% with an economic impact of €913.4 million

According to the latest **Barcelona Convention Bureau** report, the city’s MICE sector grew by 17.6% in 2023, the most recent full financial year, generating an economic impact of €913.4 million. Last year, this segment approached 19% of the Catalan capital’s total tourism, attracting approximately 3 million business travellers.

Diana **Ramón Vilarasau**

@dianaramonv

Barcelona hosted 1,945 professional events in 2023, an 18.7% increase from the previous year, attracting 580,198 delegates, up 5.2%, as the sector continues its steady recovery.

By event type, there were 538 congresses, seminars and courses in

the association sector, and 1,407 corporate conventions, events and incentive programmes. Peak activity occurred in September (13.2%), November (12.7%) and October (12.5%). The most utilised venues were hotels (73.6%), private auditoriums (6.4%), unique venues (6%), and convention centres (5.2%).

Among the sectors choosing Barcelona for their events were technology (12.8%), pharmaceutical (11.9%), medical (10.6%), industrial (8.8%) and academic (6.8%).

Event duration has also increased: two-day events rose from 23.6% to 27.5%; three-day events increased from



There are various awards around the world that reward **excellence in the organisation of events**. Recognition for good management or infrastructure is held in high regard among corporate or business tourism professionals because this motivates them to pursue the highest standards when organising events or creating impactful experiences in a sector that is constantly innovating.



Recently, **PortAventura Convention Centre** won gold in the “Large Venue” category and silver in the “Hotels” category at the **Global Eventex Awards 2024**. In addition, for the second consecutive year it placed in the top three convention centres in Europe at the **2024 M&IT Awards in London**. In regard to Spanish accolades, it was awarded gold at the eventplus Awards in the “Best Venue” category and was chosen as “Spain’s Best Convention Centre 2024” at the **World MICE Awards**.

## A large versatile and sustainable convention centre

In order to adapt to the specific needs of each client, PortAventura Convention Centre has **24 multifunctional rooms with capacity to accommodate 6,000 people at the same time within a surface area of more than 20,000 m²**. In addition, it has 6 hotels within the resort and 4 off-site affiliated hotels, which provide convenient and comfortable accommodation and make it easy for attendees to access the resort’s two theme parks,

**PortAventura Park and Ferrari Land**, adding a playful touch to proceedings and offering exclusive areas for gala dinners, al fresco cocktails, team building activities, and shows.

**Booster AV Solutions**, a joint venture between Bmotion Audiovisual and PortAventura World, was



set up with the aim of promoting innovation, efficiency, and growth in the corporate events sector, encouraging, among other actions, the creation of an immersive room in the convention centre.

## The favourite destination of leading companies

Throughout 2024, PortAventura Convention Centre has been the setting for a wide variety of large-scale events that reflect its capacity to host gatherings from different sectors. Among the most notable, MSP GLOBAL brought together 2,000 participants, making it one of the most popular events of the year. For its part, the French company B&B Hotels welcomed 1,200 participants at its annual convention, while Kubota attracted 1,000 professionals from the agricultural sector. In addition to these events, other major companies such as BET TRAVEL, SMA Solar, and Toskani Cosmetics also chose PortAventura Convention Centre for their meetings and conventions, reaffirming its position as the number one choice for corporate events.

# Versatility and innovation for experiential event.



Made to Remember

“This year has been exceptional for us. We have continued to grow, whilst maintaining our commitment to quality, innovation, and sustainability. The recognitions we’ve obtained are a reflection of the effort and dedication of our team, as well as the trust that our clients place in us.”

“Looking to the future, we continue to have our sights set on new markets and sectors, always prioritising the experience of our clients and our responsible management model.”



**Malin Nilsson**  
DIRECTOR OF PORTAVENTURA BUSINESS & EVENTS





The Smart City World Expo Congress held at Fira de Barcelona. Photo: Fira.

20.3% to 26.6%; and events lasting four or more days account for 17%.

#### THE BUSINESS TRAVELLER PROFILE

According to the **Barcelona Tourism Observatory (OTB)**, 66.5% of all business tourists visiting Barcelona in 2023 were international visitors, 72.5% of whom arrived by air.

The OTB report shows that 75.7% of corporate travellers are men aged 25-64, with women making up 24.3%. They are typically highly educated and more likely to travel alone compared to leisure tourists.

The vast majority (82.8%) opted for hotel accommodation, staying an average of four nights. While 43.4% travelled alone, 56.6% travelled in groups with colleagues.

Business travellers spend an average of €223 per day in the destination, compared to €151 for leisure tourists. They also show a higher likelihood of re-

turning, with nearly 70% making repeat visits, compared to 48.5% for leisure tourists.

#### LEADING THE RANKINGS

According to the **International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)**, Barcelona is the top-ranked non-capital city and Spain's leading destination for congresses in 2023. The city has maintained its position in the MICE Top 5 for over two decades.

In the latest ICCA rankings, Barcelona places 5th globally for international congresses (139) - behind Paris (156), Singapore (152), Lisbon (151) and Vienna (141), and ranks 3rd for participant numbers.

Additionally, in **Cvent's** 2024 ranking of Europe's top 25 meeting destinations, Barcelona maintains its 2nd place position, surpassed only by London.

#### MOST SOUGHT-AFTER DESTINATION

Cvent highlights Barcelona as one of Eu-

rope's most sought-after meeting destinations. 'The stunning architecture, rich culture and renowned gastronomy make Barcelona an ideal destination for business meetings, conferences and events, offering a unique blend of history, innovation and creativity,' the report states.

With over 37,000 hotel rooms and more than 10 million square feet of convention space, it offers event organisers unparalleled options, including various venues and conference centres such as the expansive, modern Fira Barcelona and the historic Palau de la Música Catalana, alongside unique venues to suit all requirements and budgets.

#### FIRA DE BARCELONA: RECORD RESULTS

**Fira de Barcelona** closed 2023 with record results and ambitious strategic projects ahead. The exhibition institution achieved revenues of €215 million, up 17.9% from 2022, and a record EBIT-

# COSTA DAURADA events



**CDCB**  
Costa Daurada  
ConventionBureau



[www.costadaurada.info/convention-bureau](http://www.costadaurada.info/convention-bureau)





The Montjuïc venue will undergo renovation to coincide with the centenary of the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition. Photo: Fira.

DA of €33.5 million, representing a 6.6% increase.

These historic results encompass more than 270 trade shows, congresses and various events held at the Montjuïc and Gran Vía venues and the Barcelona International Convention Centre (CCIB), excluding international activities.

These results, combined with ambitious renovation and expansion plans for the Montjuïc and Gran Vía venues, demonstrate Fira's current strength and robust outlook.

2023 featured major technology, industrial and medical events, including MWC Barcelona, Integrated Systems Europe (ISE), Smart City Expo World Congress, tech multinational events for VMware and Gartner, CPHI (the world's leading pharmaceutical industry fair) and world congresses for Parkinson's, Osteoporosis and Gastrointestinal Oncology, among others.

With regard to international activity, Fira continues to manage two exhibition centres in China and has organised seven fairs in various countries: Smart City Expo in Brazil, Mexico, Bogotá, Argentina, China and Qatar, plus HostelCuba.

For 2024, the institution maintains positive expectations for activity throughout the year and anticipates exceeding the revenue and number of international events for 2023.

#### CENTENARY EXPANSION

To coincide with the centenary of the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition, city authorities plan to undertake a new urban redevelopment of the Montjuïc venue to modernise its facilities and address various needs, including cultural, residential, mobility and green spaces, integrating exhibition activities with other public and civic uses.

**Barcelona ranks 5th globally for international conferences and 3rd for delegate numbers in the ICCA rankings, while securing 2nd place, just behind London, in the Cvent 2024 rankings**

The renovation, which requires a €149.6 million investment funded through **Fira 2000**, aims to optimise exhibition facilities by updating and preserving its listed historic buildings in line with efficiency, digitalisation and sustainability criteria, transforming it into a unique European venue and international benchmark. ■

# MADRID, THE CITY WHERE MEETINGS COME TO LIFE



Light, energy, a zest for living. These are the hallmarks of Madrid, a city that buzzes with life. You can feel this life everywhere, even in professional meetings, which turn into **one-of-a-kind experiences** in Madrid.

## UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES

Explore the city's streets and admire its historic buildings. The area of **Paseo del Prado and El Retiro Park**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, offers an endless range of must-see monuments and cultural institutions. The blue sky invites you to share some laughs in one of the many outdoor cafés in Madrid, a sociable, welcoming city that will make your corporate event an **unforgettable meeting**.

## EXCITEMENT AT EVERY TURN

You'll find **incredible venues, hotels that will win over even the most demanding traveller, itineraries full of stories and mysteries, artisans** who will share their knowledge with your group, **rooftop bars and restaurants with 360° views, first-rate gastronomy** and, first and foremost, an **endless supply of one-of-a-kind experiences**. The city has a special energy that makes any event held in Madrid come to life.

member of



Madrid Convention Bureau  
info.mcb@esmadrid.com  
esmadrid.com/mcb



**MADRID  
CONVENTION  
BUREAU**



New initiative to boost the positive impact of MICE activities

## Madrid Region Champions Sustainable MICE Tourism

Both Madrid's City Council and the Regional Government have reinforced their commitment to economic, social and environmental sustainability in tourism, with a particular focus on the MICE sector. This three-pronged approach includes promoting sustainable events, measuring and offsetting CO2 emissions from major gatherings, and supporting ecological certification for venues. Plans also include implementing energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy systems at landmark venues such as the Caja Mágica, alongside promoting active transport options.

Vivi **Hinojosa**

@vivi\_hinojosa

**D**irectory of Social Enterprises Through their **Directory of Social Enterprises, Madrid's City Council** and the **Convention Bureau** are taking innovative steps to enhance MICE tourism's positive impact. This guide provides event organisers with access to a comprehensive catalogue of Madrid-based associations, foundations and NGOs, along with suggested activities for incorporating social responsibility into event planning.

This resource helps identify the most appropriate positive impact initiatives for the destination and the organisations capable of delivering them, fostering direct benefits for the community. The collaboration between MICE tourism and local organisations increases opportunities for economic, social and cultural development while enriching participant experience, resulting in greater satisfaction with both the event and the destination.

The directory features over 60 detailed activities, with a strong focus on social sustainability through educational and volunteer initiatives, alongside environmental and cultural activities. Examples include awareness sessions led by people with intellectual disabilities and autism, jewellery workshops run by women at risk of social exclusion, reforestation projects, decorating pyjamas for sick children, and distributing essentials to vulnerable families.



Located in Madrid's Sierra Norte region, establishments like CicloLodge offer their facilities and services for unique corporate events.

### ONGOING UPDATES

The catalogue also includes information about event and meeting spaces offered by these organisations. It currently features details of more than 20 organisations and will be regularly updated with new additions.

Available in both Spanish and English, the directory can be downloaded from the **Madrid Convention Bureau's** newly redesigned website, which

streamlines the process of finding venues and services for meetings. The site includes a dedicated section on sustainability and legacy, highlighting these two key pillars of their strategy.

### DESTINATION DIVERSIFICATION

Sustainability is also driving the strategy to diversify destinations throughout the Madrid Region, in order to distribute the economic impact of tourism across the

entire area. This approach helps redistribute visitor flows and reduce concentration in the capital.

This aligns with the growing trend of seeking alternative venues for professional meetings, particularly in natural settings that offer both escape (or concentration), provided they are equipped with the latest technology and reliable internet connectivity.

Just to prove the point, here's an example. Actually, make it two. The Sierra de Madrid offers MICE clients a perfect blend of work and relaxation in natural surroundings. The **CicloLodge hotel**, situated at the foot of the Guadarrama mountains in the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park, is capitalising on the region's potential for such meetings and events.

As well as its 15 well-appointed rooms with complimentary WiFi, the hotel offers various corporate event services, including a restaurant and private wellness area for relaxation after a busy workday.

It also provides a wide range of team-building activities designed to foster collaboration among participants in a natural setting that helps attendees disconnect from city life while promoting creativity and group expression. Their team-building options can be tailored to each company's needs, ensuring an enriching and motivating experience.

### NEW VENUE IN BOADILLA DEL MONTE

The **Faro CGS** has expanded its event spaces, positioning itself as one of the Madrid Region's most comprehensive and distinctive venues. Located in Boadilla del Monte, just 15 minutes from the capital, it offers a natural setting and versatile spaces for corporate events.

Situated beside the lake in Banco Santander's Financial City, the venue features three rooms totalling nearly 520 square metres, all equipped with advanced technology and flexible furnishings suitable for various event types. The jewel in the crown of this venue is the outdoor terrace, El Pantalán.

These are just two examples of the many venues across the region that are adapting their facilities to meet this profitable sector's evolving preferences and requirements. ■



Investment in improvements and new strategies to boost city business

# Andalusia updates its MICE offering to enhance its appeal

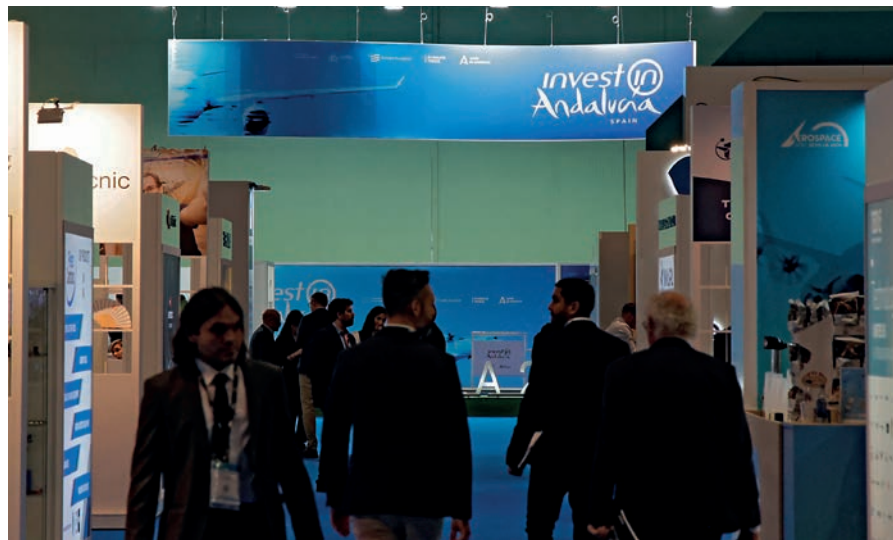
Ángeles Vargas

@angelesvargaspe

Andalusia's MICE proposition enjoys significant popularity both domestically and internationally, closely linked to its heritage, gastronomy, climate and traditions. To strengthen this appeal, the **Regional Government of Andalusia** maintains an active strategy of attending major industry events and organising professional workshops aimed at travel agencies. Alongside this, whilst continuing to add unique new offerings, well-established venues are undertaking modernisation programmes to consolidate their position in the market.

In the case of Fibes, the **Seville Conference and Exhibition Centre**, the municipal public company **Contursa** has allocated €500,000 for various improvements, including renovating the floor of Hall 2 for the first time since it opened over 35 years ago, waterproofing the car park roof, and upgrading security and access control systems. These preparations are essential as the venue will host the **United Nations Conference** in 2025. The **Seville Congress & Convention Bureau** emphasises the importance of the new high-quality hotels that have been added, as well as the 100 international air connections following more than €100 million invested in airport expansion in recent years.

The **Cádiz Conference Centre** began renovation work last spring with an investment of nearly €1 million to restore the building's glass dome, replacing all glazing, reinforcing the metal structure and waterproofing. The new glass panels



Aerospace & Defence Meetings-ADM Seville 2024 was held at Fibes.

**From September 2024 to July 2025, FYCMA has scheduled around 100 events expected to attract more than 160,000 attendees, primarily business professionals**

feature a solar control coating that prevents overheating whilst allowing natural light to enter, contributing to energy efficiency.

The importance of having new or renovated facilities is evident in Cordoba, where, according to the City Council, the 2022 opening of the **Cordoba Exhibition, Trade Fair and Convention Centre** (CEFC) has radically transformed the city's position in the MICE sector, enabling

it to bid for events that were previously beyond its infrastructure capabilities.

In Granada, a notable recent initiative called 'Together We Are Much More' developed by **Fermasa, the Armilla Exhibition Centre** (Feria de Muestras de Armilla), a member of the Granada Convention Bureau, aims to maximise the venue's potential by generating year-round activity in collaboration with businesses and institutions from Granada and other provinces.

The **Malaga Trade Fair and Congress Centre** (FYCMA) continues to expand and has planned new professional trade shows and major international conferences for 2024–2025. Technology, business, and healthcare will feature prominently in a programme that will attract more than 160,000 attendees through next July, mostly professionals, with large-scale events hosting up to 3,000 participants. ■

# MICE

REGIÓN DE  
MURCIA  
Spain

Meetings  
Incentives  
Conventions  
Events

# READY TO *meet you*

[turismoregiondemurcia.es/en](https://turismoregiondemurcia.es/en)



Visit Región de Murcia



Costa Cálida  
**REGIÓN  
DE MURCIA**  
SPAIN



# Murcia Region: An Emerging Hub Gaining Connectivity and Visibility

MICE tourism is establishing itself as a key priority for tourism development in the Region of Murcia, not only for its role in reducing seasonal demand but also for generating employment, boosting the economy and projecting a high-quality destination image. International client numbers are growing, with improved air and rail connectivity proving crucial to this expansion.



The Region of Murcia offers over 7,000 seats across its four auditoriums and convention centres. Source: Sergio González

In 2023, the Region of Murcia hosted 153 congresses attracting 40,260 attendees, according to the latest complete data available. While congresses represented only 13.4% of all meetings, they drew the highest number of national and international attendees, accounting for 51.3% of the total. Daily delegate spend averaged €223 for those staying in four-star hotels and €206 for three-star accommodation. This includes registration fees, accommodation, meals and additional expenses such as local transport and shopping.

In 2023, meetings tourism generated a direct economic impact of €32.6 million in the city of Murcia. The sector's influence extends beyond the capital, with destinations such as Cartagena, Águilas, Lorca and Mar Menor-La Manga also actively pursuing congress bids and improving their services to strengthen their position in the global MICE market. Cartagena alone saw a 52% increase in MICE events during the first half of 2024, while Lorca's IFELOR complex hosted 7 trade fairs and 6 congresses, conferences or festivals.

### 7,000 CONFERENCE CENTRE SEATS

Murcia offers more than 7,000 seats across the Víctor Villegas Auditorium and Conference Centre in Murcia, El Batel Auditorium and Conference Centre in Cartagena, the Infanta Doña Elena Auditorium in Águilas, and the Margarita Lozano Auditorium in Lorca. The region also boasts an impressive selection of unique venues, ranging from spaces in Murcia's agricultural heartland to archaeological sites, medieval buildings and historic edifices, plus three wine routes featuring wineries suitable for medium-sized events.

Thanks to this variety of spaces, facilities and services, different localities have events and conferences confirmed



MICE events in Cartagena attracted more than 15,000 attendees in the first half of the year. Source: El Batel Auditorium

### Murcia's MICE sector calls for increased action in order to meet SDGs

practically every month, and the Region of Murcia has also become a host for prestigious music festivals.

The growth in international clients is one of the most visible changes in the destination, with the **Murcia Convention Bureau** noting 'slow but positive progress'.

In recent years, organisers have shown increased interest in cultural and gastronomic activities, greater awareness of quality and sustainability certifications, heightened demand for activities aligned with Sustainable Development Goals, and the desire of delegates to make a positive impact on their host city.

### CONNECTIVITY: THE KEY TO GROWTH

Regional connectivity is strategic to MICE tourism growth. For the 2024/2025 winter season, Murcia will maintain connections with nine cities across four countries: Manchester, London Gatwick and Birmingham (UK); Dublin (Ireland); Oujda and Marrakech (Morocco); and Madrid, Barcelona and Gran

Canaria (Spain). The planned capacity of 208,844 seats represents a 17% increase from the previous season.

Additionally, the launch of the **Oui-go** rail service connecting Murcia with Madrid, complementing the existing AVE high-speed service, will provide MICE travellers with more frequent journeys, shorter travel times and competitive pricing.

### OVER 22,700 HOTEL ROOMS

The Region of Murcia's hotel infrastructure is constantly evolving, with a current capacity of 22,780 rooms, excluding hostels, campsites, rural accommodations and tourist apartments. The city of Murcia accounts for 20% of this capacity.

Notable developments include the upcoming launch of Murcia city centre's first 5-star hotel, a **Barceló Hotel Group** project that will operate under the Royal Hideaway brand. Renovations are already underway and will feature exclusive dining concepts, further enhancing the region's appeal for premium MICE tourism.

Meanwhile, **Grupo Jemeca** is in the final stages of tendering a new 80-room hotel in the city, whilst property investment trust **Silicius** plans to construct a 75-room hotel at the Thader Shopping Centre, which will be operated by **B&B Hotels**.

### The Region of Murcia features 5 MICE destinations, 2 convention bureaux and 4 conference centres

In terms of international brand presence, the 2023 opening of the Grand Hyatt La Manga Club and Resort has given both Cartagena and the wider region a significant boost in the luxury, incentive travel, and meetings and conferences sector.

### ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS

The Region of Murcia's supplementary attractions combine rich local culture with diverse active tourism and outdoor pursuits, including golf trails, water sports and an extensive network of hiking routes.

The Wine Routes programme and local gastronomy, encompassing Murcia's '1,001 Flavours', are drawing visitors with bespoke experiences such as wine tastings, themed vineyard dinners and high-end culinary events. Murcia's status as Spain's Gastronomic Capital in 2020 and 2021, along with securing prestigious events such as the 2025 Michelin Guide Gala, further enhances the region's MICE proposition. ◀



Conference and exhibition centres strengthen their commitment to sustainability and service improvements

## Basque Country strengthens its position as a conference destination

The Basque Country presents a positive outlook for its conference sector, with sustained growth and a diverse offering. The region boasts modern, well-equipped facilities for hosting all types of events, complemented by its rich cultural and gastronomic heritage. This has enhanced its appeal as a MICE destination and its capacity to attract a wide range of events and delegates.

The Basque Country has successfully consolidated its conference sector in recent years. In 2023, it welcomed 130,733 visitors to conferences and conventions, up from 117,232 in 2019, before the pandemic, according to data from **Eustat, the Basque Statistics Institute**. The province of Vizcaya recorded the highest numbers with

97,930 visitors, followed by Guipúzcoa with 28,959, and Álava with 3,844. These figures exclude other activities held at exhibition and conference venues, such as cultural events and training courses.

### A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR SAN SEBASTIÁN

San Sebastián ended 2023 with excellent

activity levels. The combined turnover of the **Kursaal** Conference Centre and Miramar Palace, both managed by the Kursaal society, reached €5 million, a 4.2% increase from the previous year. Together, the two venues generated an economic impact of €55.4 million in Guipúzcoa.

The Kursaal Centre hosted 326 events, attracting 362,854 attendees



## YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER TO INCREASE DIRECT SALES



CUSTOMIZED  
WEB DESIGN



BOOKING  
ENGINE



MARKETING  
ONLINE



BUSINESS  
INTELLIGENCE



ADDONS &  
CONNECTIVITY



REAL SUPPORT  
TEAM

100% WIN2WIN MODEL

No setup fees, no budgets, no investments ...  
**PAY ONLY FOR SUCCESS!**

JOIN OUR CLUB\*  
**bookingcore.com**

\*Admission rights reserved. Our club exclusively welcomes **truly bold hotels**.



and surpassing its 2019 record business volume. Of these, 181 were conferences and other meetings, representing a 24% increase from 2022. The corporate sector achieved a historic record, with convention and seminar revenue up by 46%. Conference activity saw a 13% increase in delegate numbers compared to 2022. In the cultural sector, it achieved its second-best year ever in terms of revenue. It was also one of the most successful years for event-related services, including audio-visual, lighting, and other technical services.

The Miramar Palace maintained strong momentum, hosting 235 events that attracted 24,870 people. It closed the year with a 6% revenue increase compared to 2022.

The Kursaal society has approved its 2024–2027 strategic plan, outlining its roadmap for the coming years. Key focus areas include strengthening the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – ongoing digital

transformation, promoting meetings and events in strategic sectors, and enhancing the social legacy generated by professional gatherings.

#### BILBAO: MORE SUSTAINABLE

Bilbao is a major hub for conference tourism. In 2024, it has hosted significant events including the National Congress of the Spanish Society of Primary Care Physicians (SEMERGEN), attracting 5,000 delegates to the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC) in Barakaldo. The Spanish Society of Cardiology (SEC) Congress also brought around 4,000 delegates to the Euskalduna Palace, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

The city, capital of the Vizcaya province, has made a strong commitment to sustainability and has once again ranked as Spain's leading city in the Global Destination Sustainability Index 2024, which ranks sustainable destinations for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions. It climbed 10 places from the pre-

vious edition to achieve the 14th position out of 40 cities.

#### ÁLAVA: INTERNATIONAL BREAKTHROUGH

Although smaller in volume, Álava has also contributed to the sector's growth in the Basque Country. It hosted several notable events in 2024. The Europa Conference Centre in Vitoria, the region's oldest conference venue and considered one of the city's most modern and sustainable buildings, together with Villa Suso Palace, have hosted over 335 events. Vitoria, the first certified urban ecotourism destination, has hosted regional events such as the VI Employment Congress, with over 400 participants, and the XXI National Congress of the Spanish Society of Radiological Nursing (SEER). Notably, it hosted its first international event with the United Nations International Conference on Victims of Terrorism in October, marking the first time this event has been held outside UN headquarters in New York. ■



Celebration of the 50th anniversary of Ibermática technology services at the Kursaal Conference Centre in 2023. Photo: Palacio de Congresos Kursaal/ Mikel Blasco.

# MARBELLA, CITY OF CONFERENCES

## Experience MICE Excellence

PR



Marbella is renowned both within Spain and beyond for its sunshine and beaches and charming Old Town, as well as an **exclusive destination for the MICE sector with every facility.**

Located in the heart of the Costa del Sol, just 30 minutes from Málaga International Airport, Marbella boasts extensive, first-class hotel infrastructure alongside a wide range of options in tourism, culture, nautical activities, gastronomy, leisure, wellness, shopping and luxury. Thanks to these varied attractions, delegates and business travellers can explore the destination whilst enjoying **a unique MICE experience in an unforgettable city.**

The city of Marbella offers optimal facilities for organising conferences, meetings, incentives and events of any size.

The **Adolfo Suárez Conference, Exhibition and Trade Fair Centre**, lo-

cated in the city centre, offers expansive spaces for all types of events.

Purpose-built to host conferences, conventions, product launches, exhibitions and meetings of all kinds, both national and international, it provides clients with infrastructure that embodies our commitment to excellence.

With **over 10,000 square metres of space**, the venue houses an auditorium, meeting rooms, catering facilities and an exhibition hall all under one roof.

The key advantages of this centre are its capacity to offer **two large areas – an exhibition space and conference facilities – within the same building**, combined with its prime city-centre location.

Of particular note is the presence of **outstanding accommodation, including 5-star 'Grand Luxury' hotels, 5-star hotels and 4-star properties**, featuring extensive modern facilities of



varying capacities, multimedia resources and comprehensive amenities that showcase Marbella as a destination that specialises in conferences.

The MICE sector in Marbella is complemented by **numerous companies and professionals** offering supplementary services for meeting and event organisation, including audio-visual equipment hire, simultaneous interpretation, catering and many others.

Another highlight is the extensive variety of venues and leisure providers, including the Marbella City Theatre, flamenco venues, golf courses, active tourism companies, water sports facilities, premium experience providers, cinemas, museums, as well as rooftop venues and beach clubs, among many others.

Marbella hosts **important national and international conferences** throughout the year, including Traveller Made for luxury travel agents, the Nu Skin cosmetics multinational corporation and Marbella Design Art (7th Edition), as well as the 25th World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) Congress, held in November 2025, an event of considerable importance. ■

**Marbella**  
Siente la excelencia

Plan Turístico de  
Grandes Ciudades  
de Marbella  
Junta de Andalucía

+ info [www.turismo.marbella.es](http://www.turismo.marbella.es)  
[turismo@marbella.es](mailto:turismo@marbella.es)  
Tel: (+34) 952 768 760



A strategy of promotion and increased investment

# Asturias strengthens its position as a conference destination

Diana Ramón Vilarasau

@dianaramonv

Asturias is determined to establish itself on both the national and international MICE map. To achieve this, the region's **Tourism Deputy Ministry** is implementing a package of promotional and strategic initiatives to position the Principality as a destination for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions under its own brand, **'Asturias, Meeting Land'**, launched last year.

This promotional plan highlights the region's improved air connectivity and high-speed rail links as new attractions. This year, the Principality has seen significant expansion of its transport options, with high-speed rail and direct flights to 28 destinations. A substantial portion of the twenty promotional activities planned will focus particularly on markets connected by high-speed rail, especially

Madrid, which is crucial for international delegate access, as well as Valladolid and León, alongside cities with direct air links.

### PROMOTION AND INVESTMENT

The **Asturian Government** has increased its promotional investment to nearly €300,000, supplemented by a €1.5 million high-speed rail campaign. Key initiatives include campaigns in specialist media, participation in trade events and exhibitions, and organising familiarisation trips to Asturias for industry profession-

**Enhanced air connectivity and high-speed rail add to the appeal of Asturias as a destination**

als and media representatives.

As part of its strategy to strengthen the MICE sector, the **Ministry of Presidency, Demographic Challenge, Equality and Tourism** of the Principality of Asturias has developed the 'Asturias, Meeting Land' website, designed to promote the region's attractions as a meetings destination both nationally and internationally.

### A COMPREHENSIVE OFFERING

Through this strategy, Asturias is showcasing its exceptional potential as a MICE destination, highlighting both the quality of its facilities and unique venues, as well as its professional event management capabilities. The region offers over 200,000 square metres of conference space and approximately 17,000 hotel rooms across 3-, 4- and 5-star properties.

Oviedo features two major municipally owned and managed venues: the Príncipe Felipe Auditorium and Conference Centre and the Exhibition and Conference Centre. Gijón boasts the Luis Adaro Exhibition Centre and the Laboral City of Culture Conference Centre, with multiple conference spaces and its spectacular theatre. Avilés is home to the Óscar Niemeyer International Cultural Centre, a unique space in Spain gifted by the renowned Brazilian architect of the same name, and the La Magdalena Exhibition and Conference Centre.

During the final months of this year, these three Asturian cities will host nearly 40 conferences across their venues, expecting to welcome at least 15,000 delegates, further consolidating Asturias' position in the conference tourism sector. ◀



The Exhibition and Conference Centre (PEC) of Oviedo, one of its main conference venues and one of the city's most distinctive buildings (Photo: vicenmiranda).



**Diputación Provincial de Málaga**



Continúa este road trip en

**GRITAMINOMBRE.ES**



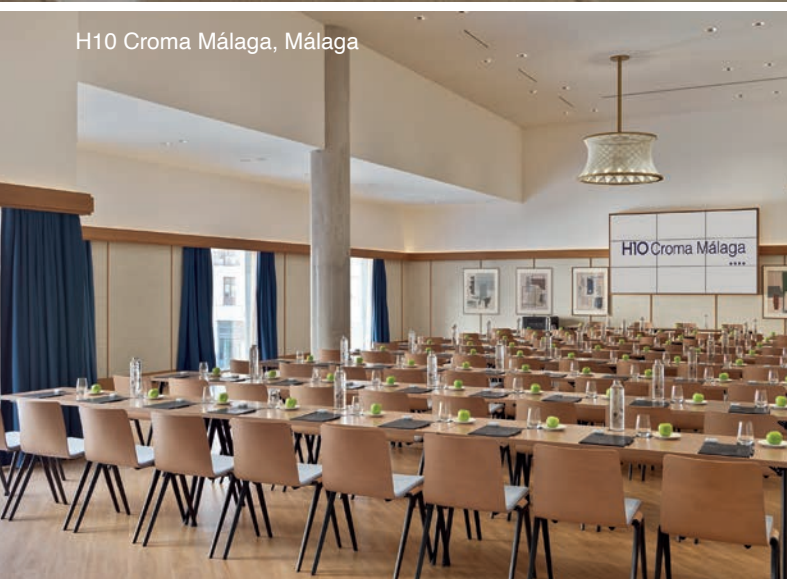
# Organise your events in exceptional venues with H10 Hotels



The One Palácio da Anunciada, Lisbon



H10 Croma Málaga, Málaga



H10 Imperial Tarraco, Tarragona



H10 Hotels offers 43 establishments in 22 destinations with exclusive facilities for holding events, from meeting rooms to magnificent terraces with spectacular views. All of them stand out for their privileged location, select gastronomy and cutting-edge technology. In addition, with the company's Stay Green plan, the organisation of events ensures a sustainable and environmentally responsible experience.



T (34) 699 412 528  
mice@h10hotels.com  
@h10hotels  
@H10.Hotels

**h10 hotels.com**