

business & mice Traveling

PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE OF TOURISM AND CORPORATE TRAVEL

No. 3 year 2026 - Price 6,00 €

DESTINATIONS MICE

Cities,
infrastructure
and strategies



Hospitality

Technology, business and innovation
in the corporate hotel

Communication & strategy

Communicating in times of crisis

Airlines

Partnerships driving connectivity

Agencies & Tour Operating

Value lies in knowing how to craft the journey.
Incentive travel, evolution

The value of knowing how to design the journey

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This magazine is founded with a clear purpose: to provide a professional and reflective perspective on business tourism and the MICE sector. Its aim is not to chase immediate news, but to offer the analysis and context needed to understand how the industry is evolving and to anticipate future change.

Through its different sections, the publication explores destinations and cities from a strategic perspective, along with air connectivity and corporate mobility, business-focused hospitality, meeting and event venues, and the role of agencies, tour operators and travel managers. Technology, sustainability and new management models run throughout the content as cross-cutting themes, fully integrated into the operational reality of the sector.

The magazine is aimed at tourism professionals, event organisers, travel managers, executives, institutions and supplier companies seeking rigorous and practical information to support decision-making. Our objective is to provide perspective, cut through the noise and deliver an expert viewpoint grounded in analysis, experience and a genuine understanding of business tourism.

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Trends, technology and analysis to understand how the sector is evolving

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Depósito Legal: M-1097-2018

ISSN: 2660-8146



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Cover: Zaragoza Conference Centre



Editorial

The strategic value of meeting in person

Professional tourism is experiencing a period of transformation. Corporate travel, incentive programmes and agency activity are evolving in line with a more demanding market, where strategic planning, flexibility and added value make the difference. This edition of Traveling Business & MICE focuses precisely on this changing landscape, analysing how the industry is adapting to new priorities without losing its core purpose: connecting people, driving business and creating meaningful experiences.

In these pages, we explore the evolving role of agencies and tour operators, which are increasingly moving towards consultative functions. Corporate travel management is no longer limited to booking services; it now incorporates data analysis, spend optimisation, risk management and the design of experiences tailored to each organisation's objectives. The growth of digitalisation coexists with the need for expert advice, shaping a hybrid model in which technology and professional knowledge complement one another.

We also focus on incentive travel, which continues to establish itself as a strategic tool for motivating teams and strengthening corporate culture. Personalisation, wellbeing and sustainability are now integrated into proposals designed to generate both emotional impact and business return. Destinations, experiences and formats are evolving to meet the demands of companies seeking programmes that are more measurable and aligned with their values.

Business travel, meanwhile, is showing signs of sustained growth. Face-to-face meetings are regaining prominence, reinforcing the importance of personal interaction in commercial development. At the same time, operational efficiency and flexibility are becoming priorities, driving technological solutions and more agile management models.

Ultimately, this issue reflects a dynamic industry moving towards a balance between innovation and experience. Agencies, tour operators and technology platforms are redefining their roles to respond to a more informed and demanding corporate traveller.

We would also like to thank our readers for their trust and loyalty. Their continued support is the greatest motivation for us to keep developing content that is useful, rigorous and aligned with the realities of the sector. Their encouragement inspires us to continue growing and to uphold the editorial commitment that defines Traveling Business & MICE.



Jose A. Muñoz
CEO



Rosario Alonso
Director

MICE & Business Travel Radar

Text: Editorial Team - Photos: Archive

The meetings tourism sector generated close to €15 billion in Spain

The meetings industry continues to consolidate its position as one of the highest value-added segments within Spanish tourism. According to sector data presented by the Spain Convention Bureau and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), activity linked to congresses, conventions and professional events generated an economic impact of close to €14.83 billion in 2025.

The figure reflects the growing weight of MICE tourism within the national tourism economy. In total, more than 10.6 million participants attended professional meetings held in Spain over the past year, confirming the sector's full recovery following the pandemic.

One of the most notable aspects of this type of tourism is visitor spending. Congress delegates record significantly higher daily expenditure than leisure travellers, making this segment a key tool for reducing seasonality and generating economic value for destinations.

The sector's growth is supported by an increasingly extensive network of cities with congress infrastructure, a specialised hotel offering and strong international connectivity that facilitates the arrival of participants from around the world.

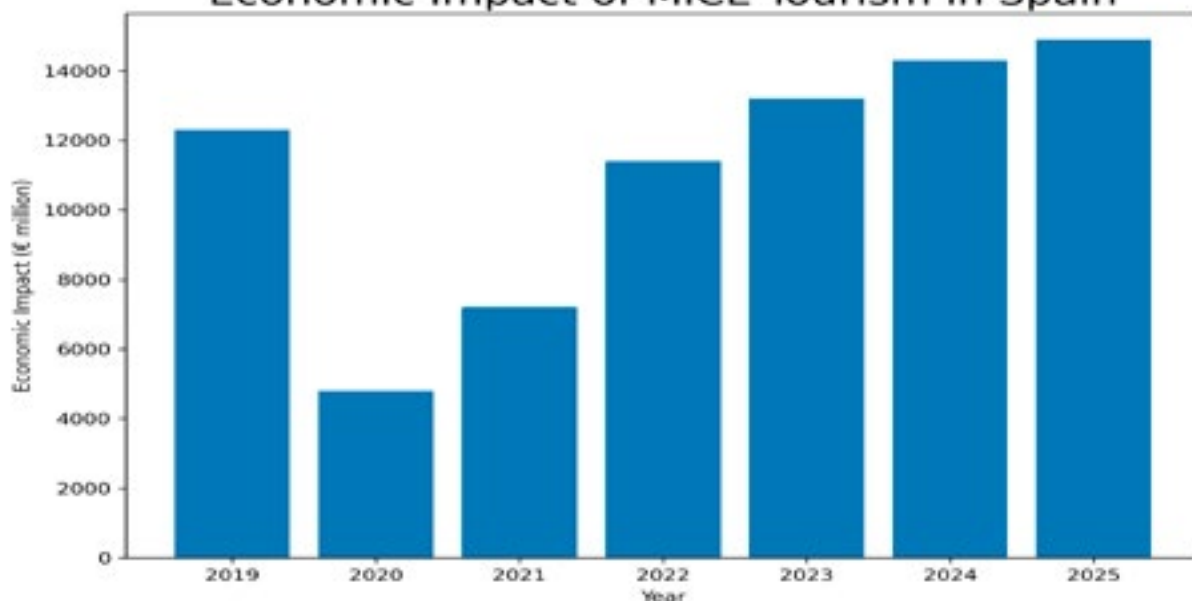
Sustainability consolidates its position as a core pillar of the events sector

Sustainability has become one of the main driving forces behind the transformation of the global events industry. Organisers, companies and destinations are increasingly incorporating environmental and social criteria into the design of congresses and professional gatherings.

Among the most widely adopted measures are the reduction of disposable materials, the use of local suppliers, responsible waste management and the offsetting of carbon emissions generated by participants' travel.

The growing interest in more sustainable events responds both to corporate demand and to the requirements of many international associations, which now

Economic Impact of MICE Tourism in Spain



include environmental criteria within their congress venue selection processes.

This evolution has also driven the emergence of new certifications and standards for responsible events, which make it possible to assess the environmental impact of meetings and congresses. In this context, sustainability is consolidating its position as one of the key elements in the transformation of the meetings tourism sector.

The spending of congress travellers is three times higher than that of leisure tourism

The meetings tourism sector continues to stand out for its high economic impact compared with other types of tourism. According to various industry reports, the average spending of congress and convention participants can exceed €350 per day, a figure that is three times higher than the average spend of leisure tourists in many European destinations.

This visitor profile is characterised by shorter stays but higher consumption of services linked to accommodation, food and beverage, transport and complementary activities. In addition, many delegates extend their stay to enjoy leisure activities, further increasing the economic impact of the event on the destination.

For cities and tourist destinations, attracting congresses has become a priority strategy not only for its economic return, but also for its ability to draw visitors during lower-demand seasons.

MICE tourism also contributes to positioning cities as hubs of knowledge and innovation, as many international congresses bring together professionals from scientific, technological and business sectors.

Hybrid events maintain their presence in the MICE industry

The combination of in-person events and digital formats has become one of the main transformations in the meetings sector in recent years. Although face-to-face gatherings have fully regained their prominence, many organisations continue to maintain a virtual component in order to extend the reach of their congresses.

So-called hybrid events allow part of the audience to participate remotely, accessing sessions via digital platforms while the meeting takes place on site.

This format offers clear advantages for both organisers and participants, as it facilitates attendance for professionals who are unable to travel and broadens the international visibility of the event.

The technological evolution of broadcasting and event management platforms has significantly improved the digital experience, incorporating networking tools, interaction with speakers and access to on-demand content. For many organisers, the hybrid model has become a strategic complement to the in-person event.

Hybrid events maintain their presence in the MICE industry

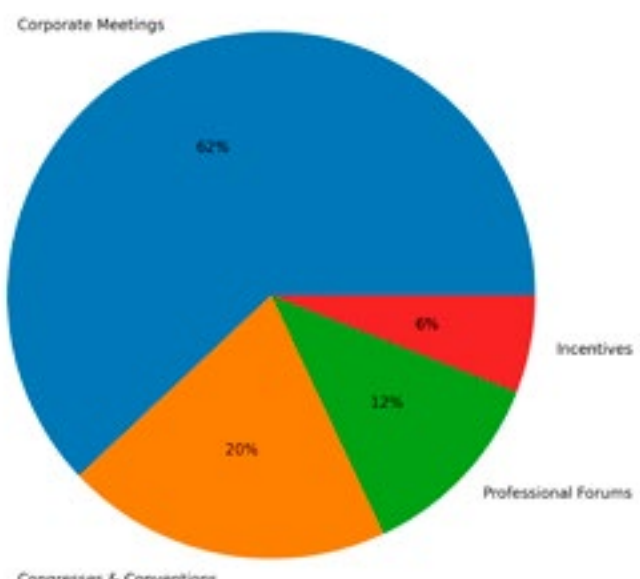
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Types of Events Held in Spain



Networking consolidates its position as a core element of congresses

Beyond academic or professional content, networking remains one of the main reasons why many professionals attend congresses and industry events.

Various industry studies indicate that the opportunity to establish professional contacts and generate new business opportunities ranks among participants' top priorities.

This trend has led many organisers to redesign the structure of events in order to incorporate more spaces and moments dedicated to interaction between attendees.

Informal sessions, themed meetings and social activities are now a regular feature of congress programmes, facilitating the exchange of ideas and the creation of professional networks.

For organisers, the challenge lies in designing environments that encourage participant interaction without losing balance with the event's professional content.

Artificial intelligence enters professional event management

Artificial intelligence is gradually being integrated into the global meetings industry. According to various industry reports, a growing proportion of event organisers are already using AI tools for tasks related to planning, attendee management and data analysis. This adoption responds to the need to optimise resources, improve the participant experience and obtain more accurate insights into the performance of professional gatherings.

The most widely used applications include systems capable of automating attendee registration, generating personalised agendas and facilitating networking among participants through algorithms that identify shared interests. These solutions help streamline processes that traditionally required greater manual intervention and reduce organisational timeframes, particularly in large-scale congresses.

Artificial intelligence is also being incorporated into event management platforms that allow organisers to analyse attendee behaviour and assess the impact of each session or activity within a congress. Based on this data, organisers can adjust content, improve future planning and design experiences that are more closely tailored to the needs of professional audiences.

DMCs strengthen their role in the organisation of international events

Destination Management Companies (DMCs) continue to play a key role within the meetings industry. These specialised agencies are responsible for designing and managing the logistics of congresses, conventions and incentive travel for international clients.

Their in-depth knowledge of the destination and their network of local suppliers allows them to coordinate essential aspects such as transport, accommodation, complementary activities and event production.

In an increasingly competitive market, DMCs have become strategic partners for international organisers seeking to ensure the success of their events.

In addition to logistical management, many of these agencies also take part in the design of experiences that integrate the cultural heritage, gastronomy or natural environment of the destination into congress and incentive travel programmes.

Their role is particularly relevant in complex events that require coordination between multiple suppliers and services.



Small meetings drive corporate activity throughout the year

Small-scale corporate meetings are gaining ground within the MICE market, driven by evolving work dynamics and the need for more operational gatherings. While large international congresses remain a cornerstone of the sector, recent reports from organisations such as the Global Business Travel Association and the Meetings Industry Association highlight the growth of so-called small meetings, particularly across the European and North American business landscape.

These types of gatherings, which typically bring together between 20 and 100 participants, enable more focused working sessions, facilitate interaction between attendees and reduce the logistical costs associated with large-scale events. In addition, companies value the possibility of organising more frequent meetings linked to specific projects or the coordination of international teams, without the operational complexity of major congresses.

For urban hotels and flexible venues, this trend is generating sustained demand throughout the year. Organisers are seeking modular rooms, integrated technology and agile services that enable short-duration meetings. This shift supports a more consistent and diversified activity pattern, where the frequency of meetings offsets the smaller scale of each event, reinforcing the role of compact formats within today's corporate market.



Venues embrace in-house audiovisual production

One of the most visible transformations in the meetings industry is the adaptation of congress centres to audiovisual production. Many venues are incorporating permanent recording and streaming studios to respond to the growing demand for digital content linked to congresses and events.

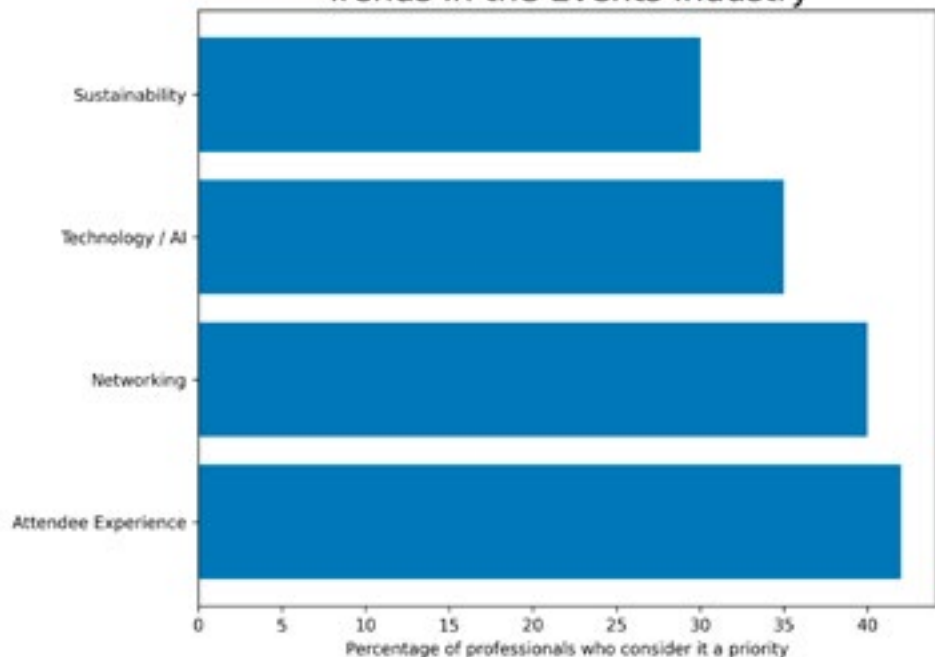
These spaces make it possible to record conferences, stream sessions live or generate audiovisual content that extends the life of the event beyond its on-site delivery.

This evolution reflects a clear trend within the sector: congresses are no longer conceived solely as in-person gatherings, but as content-generating platforms that can later be distributed in digital formats.

The integration of audiovisual studios also allows venues to offer additional services to organisers and sponsors, expanding the communication possibilities of the event.

For many congress venues, this transformation represents an opportunity to diversify their activity and adapt to the new demands of the global events industry.

Trends in the Events Industry





ROE is established as a new key metric in event evaluation

Measuring the impact of congresses and professional meetings has become a strategic priority within the MICE sector. Various analyses published by organisations such as Meeting Professionals International and the Events Industry Council highlight that organisers are expanding their evaluation systems to go beyond traditional financial return. In this context, the concept of Return on Experience (ROE) is gaining prominence as a complementary indicator to ROI, particularly in corporate events and professional congresses.

ROE allows for the measurement of qualitative elements such as attendee satisfaction, the quality of networking and the impact of content on business decision-making. This approach responds to the need to justify investment in an environment where companies demand tangible results, but also value experience and the creation of strategic relationships.

Digital event management platforms are incorporating advanced analytics tools that enable organisers to assess participant behaviour, session dwell time and levels of interaction. This data helps identify which formats generate greater value and optimise the design of future editions. For many organisers, the ability to measure the overall impact of an event is becoming a decisive factor in strategic planning.

ROE (Return on Experience):
an indicator that measures the value of the attendee experience, the quality of networking and the real impact of content beyond financial return.

Event budgets adapt to a new economic context

The meetings sector continues to adapt to an economic environment marked by inflation and rising costs across various areas of event organisation.

Various industry reports indicate that organisers are adopting more cautious strategies in budget management, seeking to optimise resources without compromising the quality of the attendee experience.

This situation has led to more detailed event planning and more thorough negotiation with suppliers, particularly in areas such as accommodation, transport and technical production.

At the same time, many companies continue to regard congresses and professional meetings as strategic tools for business generation and corporate communication.

The challenge for the sector lies in balancing economic efficiency with the need to deliver events that provide real value to participants.

CaixaBank and ILUNION promote a guide to improve accessibility in tourist accommodation

Accessibility is consolidating its position as one of the strategic pillars of tourism and the hotel sector. In this context, CaixaBank and ILUNION Accesibilidad have launched the guide *How to Make Tourist Accommodation Accessible*. Legal and Functional Requirements, a manual that addresses in a comprehensive way the points of contact between the establishment and the guest, from online booking to check-out. The document is aimed at hotels, tourist apartments, rural houses, hostels and other types of accommodation seeking to adapt their services to a diverse demand and comply with current European and Spanish regulations.

The publication presents accessibility as a complete chain that includes pre-travel information, digital channels, arrival at the establishment, internal circulation, use of rooms and common areas, participation in activities and interaction with staff. In addition to legal requirements, the guide incorporates recommendations to improve the customer experience and strengthen the competitiveness of the destination.

The potential of this segment is significant. According to the INE, around 10% of the Spanish population has some form of disability and 20% is over 65, meaning that nearly one third of the population has accessibility needs. This scenario turns accommodation adaptation into an opportunity to expand the customer base and reduce seasonality.

The manual includes checklists, examples of best practice and technological solutions such as induction loops, digital signage, accessible home automation systems and assistive products in bathrooms. It also proposes a transformation process based on initial diagnosis, staff training and transparent communication of accessibility levels. The initiative is complemented by CaixaBank Hotels & Tourism's commitment to distribute the guide among its clients and offer financing for accessibility investments.



Digitalisation reshapes smart tourism in Spain

Spain is advancing in the transformation of its tourism model driven by European funds, in a context in which the debate is no longer focused solely on investment, but on how to modernise destinations without losing their identity. The country closed 2025 with 96.8 million international tourists and €134.712 billion in spending, record figures that coincide with the rollout of the Tourism Sector Modernisation and Competitiveness Plan, endowed with €3.4 billion, together with the specific funding line for digital solutions within the DTI Network, amounting to €96.3 million until June 2026.

In this scenario, digitalisation is becoming a key tool to balance tourism pressure and redistribute visitor flows. According to McKinsey & Company, 80% of travellers concentrate in just 10% of destinations, a trend that reinforces the need for technological strategies that preserve local uniqueness.

Technology company iUrban closed 15 projects across 11 autonomous communities at the end of February 2026, with initiatives including smart platforms, the digitalisation of tourist offices and artificial intelligence-based solutions. The company, which has more than 300 clients in seven countries, is betting on its Cicerone platform to structure local information and enhance the visitor experience.

This momentum is supported by the Tourism Sustainability Plans in Destinations, which mobilised more than €1.8 billion between 2021 and 2023, with a significant share allocated to digital transition, consolidating technology as a strategic pillar of smart tourism.



4 International MICE Destinations

European models, specialisation and global competitiveness

Text: Editorial Team - Photos: Archive

Lisbon

Balancing accessibility and experience for international events

Lisbon has, in just a few years, moved from being an attractive alternative to establishing itself as one of the most competitive destinations in Southern Europe within the MICE sector. Its growth has not been accidental: it is the result of an effective combination of accessibility, moderate costs and the ability to adapt to different event formats.

The city has positioned itself particularly well for mid-sized international congresses and corporate events, where operational flexibility and attendee experience are key factors. Venues such as the Centro de Congressos de Lisboa (CCL) and FIL – Feira Internacional de Lisboa can host large-scale gatherings, while an extensive network of venues and hotels facilitates the organisation of more tailored events.

One of the elements that has strengthened its positioning is connectivity. Humberto Delgado Airport, just minutes from the city centre, significantly reduces transfer times and simplifies logistics, an aspect increasingly valued by organisers and participants.

Lisbon has also hosted major international events in recent years such as Web Summit, one of the



world's leading technology conferences. These kinds of events have reinforced the city's image as a destination capable of managing large-scale gatherings and attracting international profiles.

Beyond infrastructure, the destination offers an urban scale particularly well suited to MICE. Short distances make it possible to naturally integrate the professional agenda with complementary activities, without the need for complex transfers.

The experiential component is another of its major assets. Riverside venues along the Tagus, viewpoints, rooftops and historic buildings make it possible to design programmes that combine content and setting. This is complemented by a recognisable and accessible gastronomy that enhances the visitor experience.

Lisbon thus represents an agile, competitive MICE destination model, well adapted to the sector's new demands, where operational efficiency and experience coexist in balance.

Vienna

Congress tradition and established international positioning



Speaking of Vienna in the context of meetings tourism means referring to one of the most reliable and consistent destinations in the world. Its positioning is not the result of a recent trend, but of decades of sustained work that have placed it regularly at the top of the ICCA rankings, particularly in the field of international congresses.

The city has built its leadership on a very specific foundation: specialisation in scientific, medical and academic events. Universities, research centres and international organisations based in Vienna generate an ecosystem that supports the attraction of high-level congresses, with a stable programme throughout the year.

The Austria Center Vienna is the main driver of this activity. With the capacity to host large-scale congresses,

it is complemented by venues such as Messe Wien and a network of sites that allow for different sizes and formats. This flexibility is key in an increasingly segmented market.

Beyond infrastructure, Vienna stands out for its organisational capability. The city offers precise logistics, efficient transport and public-private coordination that facilitates the management of complex events. This level of reliability is one of the most valued factors for associations and international organisers.

Another distinctive element is the integration of historic venues within the MICE offering. Palaces, imperial buildings and concert halls allow part of the experience to extend beyond the congress venue, adding value that is particularly relevant for social programmes and corporate events.

International connectivity further strengthens this positioning. Vienna Airport acts as a strategic hub in Central Europe, facilitating the arrival of attendees from different markets

Vienna thus represents a destination model based on consistency, specialisation and execution capability. A profile less driven by visual impact and more focused on efficiency, content and trust — factors that remain decisive in the selection of venues for international congresses.



Amsterdam

Innovation, global congresses and a sustainable model

Amsterdam has established itself as one of Europe's most advanced MICE destinations, not so much in terms of volume as in positioning. Its strategy in recent years has been clear: to attract congresses and events linked to knowledge, innovation and sustainability, aligning the profile of meetings with the city's strategic sectors.

The RAI Amsterdam Convention Centre is the main hub of this activity. Its capacity to host large-scale congresses and international trade fairs places it among the most significant venues in Europe. Among its most prominent events is IBC (International Broadcasting Convention), one of the world's leading gatherings in the audiovisual and technology sector, reinforcing the city's position as a hub of innovation.

Beyond the exhibition centre, Amsterdam has developed a network of venues spread across the city that enables more flexible formats. This decentralised model responds to a growing trend in the sector: events that combine different locations and experiences within a single programme.

Connectivity is one of its key assets. Schiphol Airport, integrated into the urban system, enables fast and efficient access from major international markets.



At a local level, mobility is seamless thanks to a network that combines efficient public transport with cycling, reducing travel times and simplifying logistics for international delegations. This operational ease makes it possible to design compact agendas, with quick transfers between hotels, congress venues and event spaces.

One of the defining elements of Amsterdam's positioning is its focus on sustainability. The city has developed active policies to limit the impact of tourism and promote responsible events, prioritising quality over volume and encouraging low-impact practices. This approach is also reflected in venue design and congress organisation, where energy efficiency and sustainable mobility are integral to the offer. The urban environment reinforces this vision. Canals, historic architecture and contemporary spaces coexist in a city that allows professional content and experience to be integrated naturally, without artifice. In addition, the proximity between key points of interest facilitates complementary programmes for corporate groups.

Amsterdam thus represents a forward-looking MICE destination model: selective, well managed and aligned with the sector's new demands, where value lies not in scale but in the coherence of the whole.



Oslo

Sustainability and nature as a distinctive value

Oslo has positioned itself as one of the most interesting destinations in Northern Europe within the meetings tourism sector, with a clear offer focused on sustainability, innovation and specialised mid-sized events.

The city features venues such as the Oslo Congress Centre and other contemporary spaces that allow it to host professional congresses, conventions and corporate meetings in sectors closely linked to the country's economic profile. Energy, technology, sustainability and urban innovation are among the areas in which Oslo concentrates much of its congress activity.

In recent years, the city has hosted international forums related to energy transition and sustainable development, as well as professional gatherings linked to the green economy and mobility. This positioning reflects a clear strategy: attracting events aligned with the sectors in which Norway has the strongest international relevance.

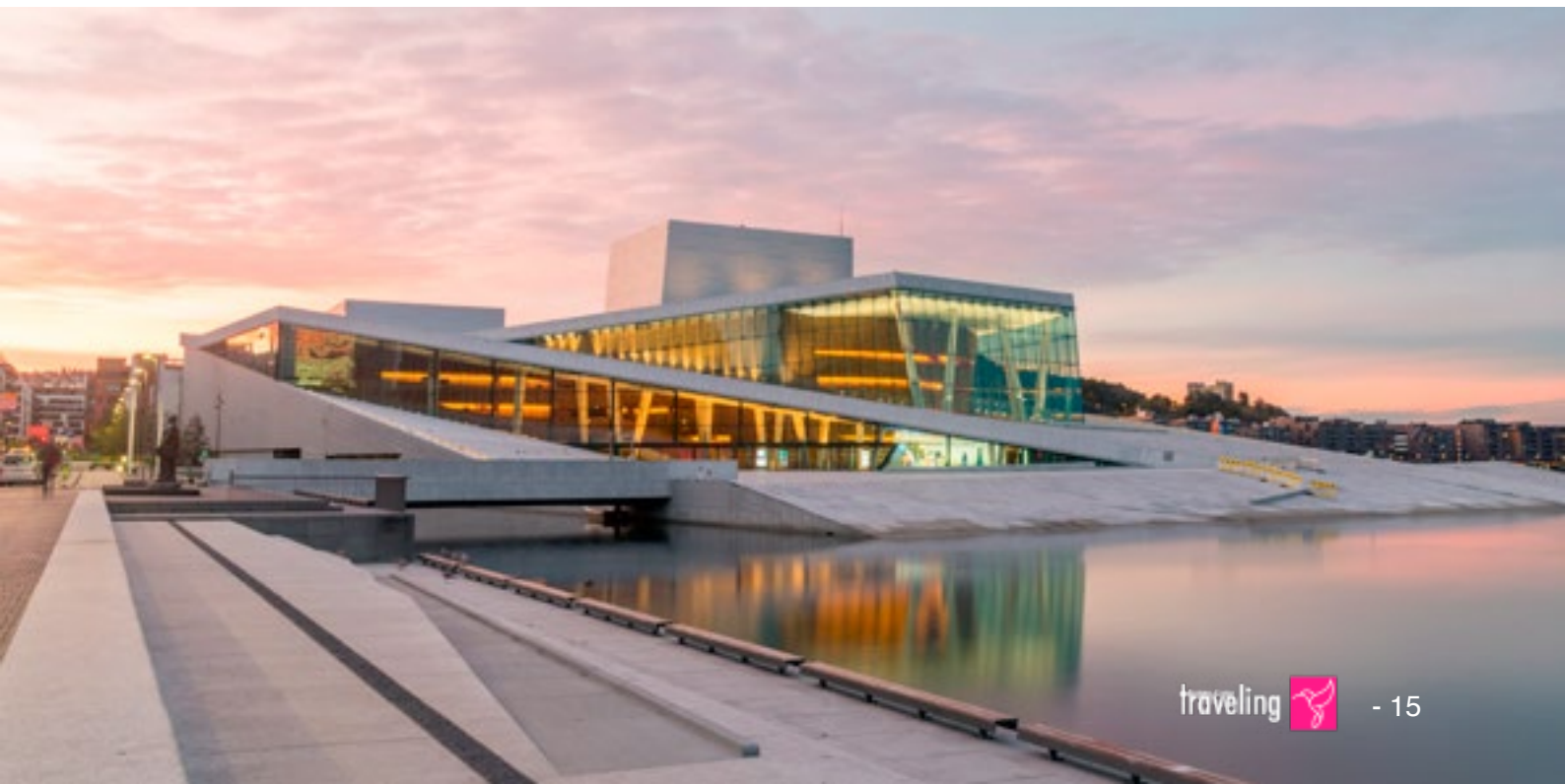
The congress infrastructure is complemented by a modern hotel network and unique venues such as the Oslo Opera House, which can host events in an iconic architectural setting by the fjord.

Oslo Airport Gardermoen connects the city with major European capitals, while the urban layout facilitates movement. The proximity between venues, hotels and points of interest simplifies logistics, an aspect particularly valued in mid-sized events.

One of the destination's key assets is its relationship with nature. The fjord, green spaces and nearby natural environments make it possible to incorporate outdoor activities into MICE programmes, adding a distinctive dimension compared with other urban destinations.

Sustainability is also a central pillar of the city's strategy. Oslo actively works on emissions reduction, energy efficiency and the organisation of responsible events, aligning itself with the new demands of the corporate market.

Oslo thus represents a MICE destination model based on specialisation, coherence and quality, geared more towards content-driven events than high volumes.



5 National MICE Destinations

Text: Editorial Team - Photos: Archive

A Coruña, mid-scale size and Atlantic vocation for events

A Coruña has gradually consolidated, in recent years, a discreet yet solid positioning within Spain's meetings tourism sector, focused particularly on mid-sized congresses and corporate events seeking an alternative to major urban destinations.

The city features one of the most emblematic venues in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula, Palexco (Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos de A Coruña), located by the sea and fully integrated into the port waterfront. Its versatility allows it to host congresses, conventions and professional gatherings in a contemporary setting overlooking the Atlantic.

This infrastructure is complemented by the Coliseum da Coruña, capable of hosting larger-scale events, as well as a network of hotels with meeting rooms that cover a wide range of needs within the MICE segment.

One of the destination's key strengths is its scale. A Coruña offers a manageable city, where distances are short and logistics are straightforward, a factor increasingly valued by organisers and delegates. This dimension also fos-

ters greater cohesion among participants during events.

Connectivity, via A Coruña Airport and its proximity to Santiago de Compostela, allows access from various parts of Spain and Europe, particularly for national congresses.

The city also brings a strong experiential component linked to its Atlantic landscape and Galician gastronomy. Products such as seafood, fish and traditional cuisine are naturally integrated into event programmes, adding identity to the destination.

A Coruña thus represents a MICE destination model based on quality, proximity and authenticity, oriented towards meetings that seek a balance between professional content and experience.

Palexco (Exhibition and Congress Palace)



Seville, international congresses with a distinctive identity

Seville has established itself as one of the most solid destinations in Southern Europe for hosting congresses and professional events, thanks to a combination of specialised infrastructure, international connectivity and a strong cultural identity.

The city's main congress hub is FIBES – Seville Exhibition and Conference Centre, a large-capacity venue that can host international congresses, conventions and large-scale corporate events. Its expansion in recent years has strengthened the city's position within the European MICE circuit.

This infrastructure is complemented by an extensive network of hotels with meeting facilities, as well as unique venues — historic courtyards, palaces and heritage spaces — that allow for the design of events with a strong experiential component.

Seville Airport offers connections to numerous European cities, while the high-speed rail network facilitates access from Madrid and other parts of Spain. This accessibility, together with the concentration of venues within a compact urban environment, simplifies event logistics.



One of Seville's key strengths is its ability to integrate culture and experience into MICE programmes. Andalusian gastronomy, flamenco and its historic heritage all contribute a distinctive character that is particularly appealing for congresses and incentive travel.

Seville thus represents a destination capable of combining organisational capacity and personality, two key factors in the selection of venues for international events.

Royal Alcázar



Zaragoza

Strategic connectivity and growth in the MICE sector



Zaragoza Congress Palace

Zaragoza is positioning itself as one of the most interesting emerging destinations in Spain's meetings tourism sector, supported by its strategic location and a well-sized congress infrastructure suited to both mid- and large-scale events.

Located between Madrid and Barcelona, the city benefits from excellent connectivity thanks to the high-speed rail network, allowing access in just over an hour from both capitals. This geographical position makes Zaragoza a natural meeting point for national congresses.

The Zaragoza Conference Centre, built for Expo 2008, is one of the city's main event venues. This facility is complemented by other spaces in the Expo area and a network of hotels with meeting facilities that enable the hosting of different event formats.

Zaragoza also offers a competitive advantage in terms of costs, making it an attractive alternative to more established destinations. This balance between quality and price is particularly valued by congress and convention organisers.



The destination combines its organisational capacity with a cultural offer linked to its historic heritage and urban identity, with landmarks such as the Basilica del Pilar and the historic city centre forming part of complementary programmes.

Zaragoza thus presents itself as a functional, accessible and growing destination within the MICE market, with an increasingly defined positioning in the national landscape.

Girona

Meetings with a distinctive identity between history and landscape

Girona has established itself as a MICE destination that combines human scale, heritage and an experiential offer that is difficult to replicate in major capitals. Its compact size facilitates the organisation of agile corporate meetings, with short distances between venues, hotels and historic spaces, allowing efficient agendas without the need for long transfers.

The city offers a network of versatile venues ranging from functional congress centres to historic buildings adapted for events. Cloisters, palaces and refurbished former industrial sites coexist with contemporary infrastructure, providing options for executive meetings, presentations and mid-sized corporate gatherings. This balance between tradition and modernity adds distinctive value to professional programmes.

Connectivity is another of its strengths. Its proximity to Barcelona, both by high-speed rail and road, facilitates the arrival of international delegations. In addition, its closeness to the Costa Brava allows incentive proposals and outdoor activities to be integrated, expanding the possibilities for designing programmes that combine pro-

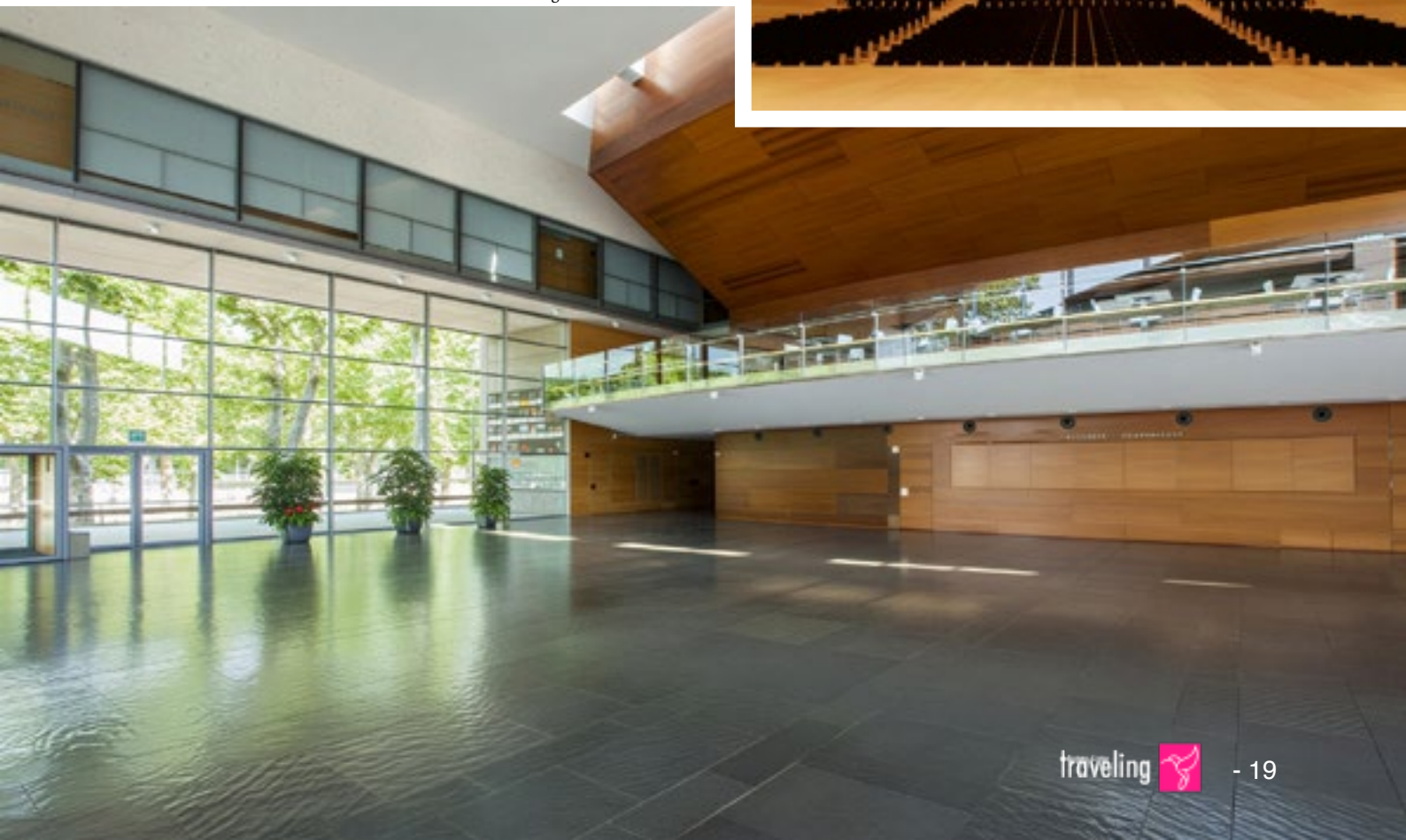
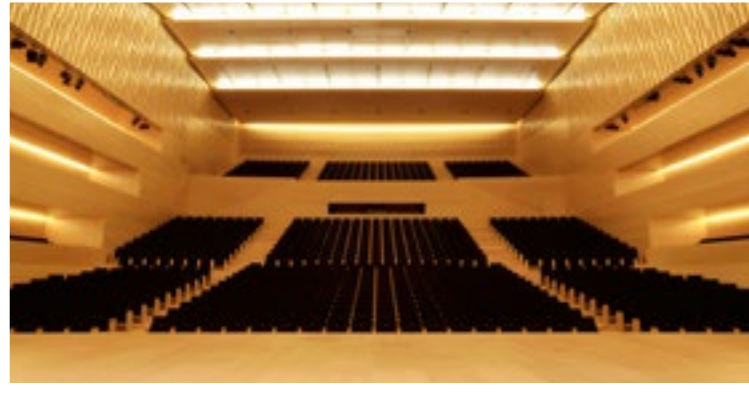
fessional content and experience.

Gastronomy also plays a key role in Girona's MICE offer. The presence of acclaimed restaurants and a strong culinary tradition make it possible to incorporate high-level gastronomic experiences as a complement to meetings and congresses. This element adds appeal to events seeking a distinctive and carefully curated setting.

The urban environment reinforces this identity. The historic centre, the bridges over the River Onyar and the medieval architecture create a setting that favours more personalised gatherings. Girona works particularly well for strategic meetings and small to mid-sized incentive programmes, where context forms part of the event's value.

It thus positions itself as a selective and well-managed MICE destination, based on proximity, authenticity and the quality of the experience.

Girona Congress Palace



Huelva, Atlantic nature and historic heritage drive Huelva's positioning in MICE tourism

Huelva is beginning to position itself more clearly within the meetings tourism landscape in southern Spain. Traditionally associated with its Atlantic coastline, natural spaces and a gastronomy deeply rooted in its territory, the province has started to develop a strategy aimed at attracting congresses, professional meetings and incentive travel seeking settings different from major urban destinations.

The city of Huelva offers a calm environment and good connectivity with Seville and the Portuguese Algarve, facilitating the arrival of both national and international participants. This is complemented by a growing hotel offer, cultural venues capable of hosting mid-sized events and a network of tourism resources that allows for the design of complementary experiences for corporate groups.

Among the most representative venues for professional meetings is the Casa Colón Conference Centre, one of the city's most emblematic historic buildings. Built in the late 19th century as a luxury hotel for British mining companies, the complex has now become a cultural and congress centre hosting conferences, conventions and institutional events. Its rooms, arranged around courtyards and galleries, make it possible to organise meetings in a distinctive architectural setting that combines history and functionality.



Congress Palace Casa Colón



The city also has auditoriums, hotels with meeting rooms and cultural spaces that broaden the possibilities for mid-sized events. This more human scale is particularly appealing for professional congresses seeking accessible and manageable destinations, where logistics are straightforward and transfers take just a few minutes.

One of Huelva's main assets within the MICE market is its natural environment. The province is home to some of the most distinctive landscapes in southern Europe, such as Doñana National Park, one of the continent's most important wetlands. This internationally recognised space for its biodiversity has become a privileged setting for incentive tourism activities and team-building programmes linked to nature.

The Odiel Marshes, the coastal pine forests and the Atlantic beaches also offer opportunities to design experiences that complement professional meetings. Activities such as cycling routes, birdwatching, estuary sailing or gastronomic experiences based on local produce are part of the proposals that can be integrated into corporate programmes.

Gastronomy is another of the destination's major attractions. Iberian acorn-fed ham from the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche, Atlantic seafood and wines from the Condado de Huelva region make it possible to incorporate high-level culinary experiences into congresses and

incentive travel. Huelva's cuisine has become an increasingly valuable tool for organisers seeking to integrate local identity into event programmes.

All of this is complemented by the destination's cultural and historical value. Huelva has a close connection with the history of Atlantic exploration and with Christopher Columbus, whose expeditions set sail from the nearby town of Palos de la Frontera. Spaces such as the Muelle del Tinto, a former mining pier now turned into one of the city's icons, and the Columbian sites in the surrounding area allow historical content to be incorporated into group visits and activities.

In an increasingly identity-driven MICE market, Huelva is beginning to consolidate itself as an interesting alternative in southern Spain. Its combination of nature, gastronomy, heritage and cultural spaces offers an attractive setting for congresses and professional meetings seeking more relaxed and authentic experiences, away from major urban circuits but with all the necessary services for event organisation.



www.destinohuelva.org

Doñana National Park



Artificial intelligence enters the meeting rooms

How hotels are redefining the MICE sector

Text: Clara Serrano Vega - Photos: Archive

Technology has ceased to be merely an operational tool and has become a strategic element within the hotel industry, particularly in the MICE segment. Over the past two years, the incorporation of artificial intelligence, data analysis and integrated platforms has been transforming not only the customer experience, but also the business model of hotels.

One of the most significant changes is taking place in the management of events and spaces. International chains and major operators are incorporating systems capable of predicting room demand, optimising pricing and adjusting availability in real time. This approach, inherited from traditional revenue management, is now being applied to MICE spaces, turning meeting rooms into dynamic assets.

According to trends identified by Amex GBT Meetings & Events, hotels are beginning to treat event spaces as flexible inventory, where technology makes it possible to maximise profitability without compromising the experience.

From manual management to predictive models

Artificial intelligence is making it possible to anticipate behaviours. From the average duration of an event to catering requirements or room configurations, current systems analyse historical patterns to improve planning.

This has a direct impact on operations: fewer errors, greater efficiency and a much faster ability to adapt to changes, something essential in the MICE environment, where flexibility is key.

In addition, process automation — from space requests to service confirmations — is reducing response times and improving relationships with corporate clients.

Hybrid events and invisible technology

Following the pandemic, hybrid events have become a structural part of the sector. However, the shift lies not only in visible technology, but in integration.



Hotels are investing in infrastructures where connectivity, streaming and audiovisual production form part of the space design rather than being an occasional add-on. This allows events to unfold seamlessly between the in-person and digital environments.

Data as a competitive advantage

Another major shift is the use of data. Hotels can now analyse with precision the behaviour of companies, organisers and attendees, generating profiles that make it possible to tailor commercial and operational proposals.

This information translates into:

- more targeted offers
- more personalised experiences
- and stronger corporate client loyalty

In an increasingly competitive market, this ability to anticipate needs is becoming a key advantage.

Sustainability and operational efficiency

Technology is also driving sustainability. Intelligent energy management systems, consumption control and waste reduction at events are part of a strategy that is no longer optional, particularly in the corporate segment. Real-time monitoring tools make it possible to adjust climate control, lighting and space occupancy according to actual use, reducing environmental impact without affecting operations.

In addition, planning platforms are incorporating carbon footprint indicators and recommendations to optimise travel, catering and materials, a trend highlighted by organisations such as the Global Business Travel Association and the Events Industry Council. These solutions enable companies and organisers to integrate sustainability criteria from the event design stage, something increasingly required in corporate tenders.

Technological evolution is redefining the role of the hotel within the MICE ecosystem. Rather than simply being a space provider, it is becoming an operator capable of managing data, optimising resources and designing experiences tailored to each event. Digitalisation also facilitates the measurement of operational impact and decision-making based on real information.

The future of the sector will not depend solely on having better facilities, but on knowing how to interpret them, manage them and connect them with an increasingly demanding client who prioritises efficiency, sustainability, measurable results and more efficient operational experiences.

Hotels strengthen flexible spaces for hybrid meetings

Demand for hybrid meetings continues to drive changes in the offer of hotels focused on the corporate segment. Various international chains are redesigning their common areas to transform them into multifunctional spaces capable of hosting everything from executive meetings to live broadcasts. This trend responds to the growth of events that combine in-person attendees with remote participation, a format that has become established following changes in work organisation.

Groups such as Accor and IHG Hotels & Resorts have announced the adaptation of modular rooms with integrated technology, videoconferencing systems and enhanced connectivity. The aim is to facilitate agile meetings, with configurations that can be modified according to group size or event type.

This evolution also affects areas traditionally intended for leisure, such as lobbies or terraces, which are being transformed into spaces for informal meetings or networking sessions. For the MICE market, this flexibility makes it possible to optimise the event experience and make better use of facilities. Corporate hospitality is thus evolving towards more dynamic models, where the versatility of space becomes a key element of competitiveness.



MICE hotel landscape

Hotels geared towards meetings

Text: Clara Serrano Vega - Photos: Archive

For years, the success of a corporate event was measured in volume. More attendees, more impact, more visibility. However, in recent times a shift in paradigm has taken hold: companies are beginning to prioritise the quality of the experience over the size of the event.

This shift is transforming the hospitality sector linked to the MICE segment. An increasing number of hotels are adapting their offer towards smaller formats, where space design, service personalisation and the uniqueness of the setting take on a central role.

So-called boutique events — small and mid-sized meetings — are gaining prominence, especially in the corporate sphere. Executive committees, strategy meetings and incentive trips are now seeking more controlled environments, where interaction and experience carry greater weight than scale.

From meeting room to experiential stage

In this context, the hotel ceases to be a simple provider of spaces and becomes a stage where the experience unfolds. Rooftops, private villas, natural settings or historic buildings are beginning to replace conventional meeting rooms, adding distinctive value.

These types of environments make it possible to design more personalised events, where every detail — from gastronomy to lighting — forms part of the concept.

In addition, exclusivity is becoming a key element. The possibility of privatising spaces or even an entire hotel is a growing demand in certain corporate segments, particularly high-end incentive travel.

Personalisation and service

Downsizing allows for a greater degree of personalisation. Hotels can tailor services, timings and offerings to each group, creating unique experiences that strengthen the connection with the organising brand.

This approach also translates into greater involvement from hotel staff, who move from standardised management to a more personalised and flexible service model.

Gastronomy, wellbeing and surroundings

The new concept of luxury in MICE is no longer limited to the space. Gastronomy, wellbeing and connection with the surrounding environment are now part of the experience.

Tailor-made menus, destination-based activities and programmes that integrate wellbeing and work have become common features of corporate events. These types of proposals respond to a clear demand: events that deliver value beyond their professional content.

A more profitable model

Although it may seem otherwise, this shift does not imply a loss of profitability. Smaller-scale events tend to generate higher spending per attendee, allowing hotels to maintain or even increase their revenue. In addition, this type of client seeks quality, repeat business and loyalty, which strengthens the hotel's positioning within the premium segment.

The MICE sector is moving towards a model where value is no longer measured by quantity, but by experience. Hotels that know how to adapt to this trend will not only attract events, but also build longer-lasting relationships with corporate clients.

Instant booking technology gains traction in corporate meetings

Instant booking platforms for meeting rooms are gaining ground in the hospitality sector focused on the MICE segment. According to industry studies published by Hospitality Technology, organisers are demanding faster processes to confirm spaces, particularly for small and mid-sized meetings. These tools allow real-time availability checks, configuration selection and the booking of additional services without intermediaries, reducing administrative time and enabling planning at shorter notice.

For hotels, this digitalisation improves room occupancy and optimises revenue management, while adapting space sales to increasingly agile corporate decision-making. The automation of the process brings meeting bookings closer to traditional hotel reservation models, driving a more efficient and flexible approach to the MICE market.

Hotels incorporate carbon footprint metrics in corporate meetings

Measuring the carbon footprint of corporate meetings is becoming a standard requirement in MICE tenders. Recent reports from the Global Business Travel Association and the Events Industry Council indicate that an increasing number of companies are requesting concrete data on emissions linked to events held in hotels. This demand is driving the adoption of tools that calculate the environmental impact of meeting rooms, catering and associated travel.

Many properties are integrating digital systems capable of estimating energy consumption and waste generation during meetings. These data allow organisers to compare venues and apply reduction measures. These include the elimination of printed materials, the use of locally sourced products and the optimisation of climate control based on actual occupancy.

This trend is transforming the value proposition of hotels focused on the corporate segment. Sustainability is moving beyond a positioning element to become an operational criterion. The ability to provide verifiable metrics is emerging as a decisive factor in the selection of venues for congresses and professional meetings.

Meeting rooms are designed for shorter and more frequent formats

The average duration of corporate meetings is decreasing, a trend highlighted by sector analyses published by Meeting Professionals International. In contrast to extended congresses, many companies are opting for half-day or full-day meetings. This evolution is influencing the design of meeting rooms in hotels oriented towards the MICE segment.

Spaces are now configured to allow rapid changes between different formats, from presentations to collaborative working sessions. Modular furniture, adaptable lighting and integrated technology make it possible to reduce set-up times. This flexibility is key to optimising room occupancy and improving operational profitability.

In addition, the increased frequency of meetings generates consistent activity throughout the year. For urban hotels, this continuous flow offsets the reduction in large-scale events. The model is evolving towards more agile meetings, with fewer participants but higher recurrence, consolidating a new balance within the corporate market.

Gastronomic experience is integrated into corporate meetings

Gastronomy is gaining greater prominence within events held in hotels. Recent reports from the Events Industry Council highlight that companies increasingly value culinary proposals linked to the local territory. This trend responds to the search for differentiated experiences within meetings and professional gatherings.

Hotels are incorporating personalised menus, food stations and more informal formats that encourage networking. This approach makes it possible to transform traditional breaks into moments of interaction between attendees. In addition, the use of local products helps reinforce the sustainability of the event.

Integrating gastronomy as part of the MICE experience expands the value of the meeting beyond its professional content. For many organisers, this element has become a key factor in improving participant satisfaction and strengthening the impact of the event.



Hotels redefining meeting spaces

Hotel projects combining design, technology and MICE positioning



Hotel Café Royal: London *historic / premium corporate events*

Located between Mayfair and Soho, this historic hotel combines heritage and contemporaneity in an offer focused on high-end corporate events. Its function rooms can host everything from executive meetings to presentations and institutional gatherings in an elegant, well-structured setting. This is complemented by a precise operational approach, where service and personalisation play a key role in the guest experience. Its location, in one of the city's most dynamic districts, facilitates the integration of the event within the urban environment.

The Hoxton: Amsterdam *urban / creative meetings*

An example of a hotel that has reinterpreted the concept of meetings within an urban setting. Its spaces, far removed from the rigidity of the traditional meeting room, are designed for dynamic gatherings, workshops and small-scale events linked to creative industries. The flexibility in the use of its common areas allows each event to be adapted to different needs. This is complemented by a relaxed yet carefully curated atmosphere, where design and functionality coexist naturally as part of the overall experience.



The Thief : Oslo *design / corporate events and creative meetings*

Located in the Tjuvholmen district, by the fjord, this hotel represents the most contemporary approach to MICE in Oslo. Its spaces, with a modern design and seamlessly integrated into the urban environment, are suited to executive meetings, presentations and small-scale events in a refined and functional setting. This is complemented by agile operations tailored to corporate groups seeking flexibility and efficiency. Its close relationship with the cultural surroundings and the waterfront adds a distinctive value, particularly for programmes that combine professional content with experiential elements.





The Palace Hotel: *Madrid · historic / corporate events*

One of the great classics of Madrid's hospitality scene, this hotel has successfully adapted to the evolving demands of the MICE segment without losing its identity. Its historic function rooms and iconic dome turn every event into a distinctive experience, particularly for corporate meetings and high-level presentations. This is complemented by a carefully managed operation, where organisation and service enable precise execution across different formats. Its location in the city's cultural axis also facilitates the integration of the event within the urban environment.



Four Seasons Hotel Madrid: *Madrid · contemporary luxury / executive meetings*

Contemporary luxury applied to the corporate segment. Its spaces make it possible to combine formal meetings with gastronomic experiences and terrace events, adapting to high-end formats and executive gatherings. This is complemented by a highly refined operational approach, where personalisation and attention to detail make the difference. Its central Madrid location facilitates connectivity with the cultural and business environment, integrating the event into a broader and coherent experience.



Finca Cortesin: *Costa del Sol · resort / incentives and strategic meetings*

Away from the urban model, this resort focuses on events in an exclusive setting where privacy and experience take centre stage. Ideal for incentives and strategic meetings in small-scale formats, it allows a high level of personalisation. Its outdoor spaces, gardens and terraces are naturally integrated into the event flow, adding a distinctive dimension. An approach that combines setting, service and flexibility, increasingly valued within the MICE segment.



Castell Son Claret: *Mallorca · historic / exclusive incentives and events*

Located in inland Mallorca, this hotel occupies a former stately estate surrounded by nature, making it a particularly suitable setting for small-scale corporate events. Its concept is centred on exclusivity, privacy and respect for the environment—key factors in incentive programmes and strategic meetings. Both indoor and outdoor spaces allow for tailor-made experiences where the rhythm of the event is shaped by its surroundings. A destination oriented towards selective, high-value MICE.



Hôtel Lutetia: *Paris · historic / renovated executive meetings*

After a major renovation, this iconic Left Bank hotel in Paris has strengthened its positioning towards selective corporate meetings. The restoration has brought back historic spaces adapted for executive gatherings and private events, combining architectural heritage with discreet technology. Its scale and layout allow for board meetings, presentations and strategic sessions in a refined, well-connected environment.

The proposal focuses on exclusivity and experience, aligned with high-end, internationally oriented MICE.



Industry news

Technology, business and innovation

Text: Editorial Team - Photos: Archive

Major hotel chains continue to redefine their strategy in the corporate segment. Technology, space flexibility and new openings are driving an evolution towards more agile meetings, hybrid events and experiences tailored to international business travel.



Marriott strengthens its technology and growth strategy for 2026

Marriott International has outlined its priorities for 2026 with a strategy focused on digitalisation and the optimisation of the MICE segment. The company is advancing in the integration of artificial intelligence for group booking management, event planning and the personalisation of corporate services. The group is also continuing to expand its global portfolio, with particular attention to hotels with congress and meeting capacity.

This approach responds to growing demand for hybrid events and mid-sized business gatherings, where operational efficiency and technology have become decisive factors for organisers and companies.



Hilton drives new strategic openings focused on corporate business

Hilton Worldwide continues to expand its presence in international hubs with new openings planned in strategic locations for business travel, including London and Istanbul Airport. These properties incorporate meeting and event spaces, with a strong focus on connectivity and room flexibility.

The chain aims to strengthen its positioning in the MICE segment, particularly in destinations with high volumes of business travellers. Proximity to airports and financial centres enables the hosting of executive meetings and corporate gatherings that require agile logistics and reduced travel times.



Opening of Marriott-affiliated resort with strong MICE focus in Asia

Marriott International-affiliated partner The Fern Hotels & Resorts has inaugurated a new resort in Jaipur, India, oriented towards corporate events and large-scale meetings. The property, with 107 rooms, includes spaces designed for conventions and business gatherings. The company estimates that a significant share of its revenue will come from weddings and events, including the MICE segment. Jaipur continues to consolidate its position as an emerging destination for meetings and incentives, combining hotel infrastructure with strong cultural appeal. This type of development reinforces the presence of major chains in markets with growing demand for international corporate events.



Accelerating digitalisation of corporate meeting bookings

IHG Hotels & Resorts has strengthened its digital event planning platform, enabling organisers to compare venues, check availability and confirm meetings in real time. The tool is being rolled out across brands such as InterContinental, Crowne Plaza and voco, with a strong focus on the corporate segment.

The digitalisation strategy aims to reduce response times and improve efficiency in event contracting. This development responds to growing demand for more agile processes from companies and agencies, particularly in small and mid-sized meetings where speed of decision-making is a decisive factor.

Major hotel chains are adapting their strategy to a scenario in which the corporate segment is regaining momentum while also shifting its priorities. According to industry analyses published by professional outlets such as Skift Meetings, MeetingsNet and Business Travel News, demand for in-person meetings has increased, but with more efficient formats and more compact agendas. This has led hotels to rethink the design of their spaces, focusing on modular rooms, integrated technology and hybrid areas that combine work, networking and informal gatherings.

Another key adjustment is the digitalisation of event contracting. Chains are incorporating platforms that allow real-time availability checks, space configuration and fast quotation processes. This shift responds to a trend identified by organisers and agencies: shorter decision-making cycles. Companies

are planning with less lead time and seeking faster processes, forcing hotels to simplify procedures and improve commercial efficiency within the MICE segment.

At the same time, the growth of business travel is reinforcing the role of hotels located in urban centres and well-connected areas. Major chains are prioritising openings in destinations with strong business activity and good accessibility. There is also a clear focus on mid-sized meetings and executive gatherings that require flexible spaces and personalised services. Sustainability and operational efficiency are becoming additional strategic drivers, shaping a more adaptable model focused on corporate experience.



Meliá Hotels International boosts its MICE segment in European urban hotels

Meliá Hotels International is continuing to strengthen its MICE offering across urban hotels in Europe, with improvements in connectivity, audiovisual technology and flexible space configurations. The chain is adapting traditional meeting rooms to more dynamic formats, oriented towards executive meetings and corporate events.

The MICE segment remains one of the group's strategic pillars, particularly in cities with strong business activity. The company is seeking to attract mid-sized congresses and international corporate gatherings, where urban location and operational efficiency are key factors.



Radisson Hotel Group strengthens its Radisson Meetings programme

Radisson Hotel Group has expanded its Radisson Meetings programme with new technological solutions and sustainability-focused measures. The initiative includes tools for hybrid events, reduced environmental impact and greater flexibility in meeting room configurations. The chain has identified growth in small-format meetings and corporate gatherings that prioritise efficiency and experience.

The programme is being implemented across hotels in Europe and the Middle East, with the aim of attracting international events and strengthening the group's positioning within the MICE segment.



Minor Hotels strengthens its MICE segment with new NH Collection openings in Europe

Minor Hotels continues to expand its presence in the meetings segment with new additions to the NH Collection brand across Europe. Among them is the NH Collection Helsinki Grand Hansa, opened following the renovation of two historic buildings in the Finnish capital's city centre.

The hotel features meeting spaces for corporate events and technology designed to support hybrid formats. The group continues to position MICE as one of its strategic pillars, particularly in cities with strong business activity. These openings reinforce its offering for congresses and executive gatherings in European urban destinations.



Hyatt Hotels Corporation strengthens its meetings strategy in Europe with new spaces

Hyatt Hotels Corporation has expanded its corporate meetings offering across several European properties, introducing modular spaces and enhanced technological capabilities. The initiative responds to the growing demand for mid-sized events and executive meetings. The chain is focusing on flexible configurations that allow meeting rooms to be adapted to different formats, from workshops to corporate presentations. This approach aims to attract business clients who prioritise versatility and speed in event organisation. Hyatt Hotels Corporation is thereby strengthening its positioning in the MICE segment, which remains a key pillar of its growth strategy in Europe.

Independent hotels & venues

Lifestyle, distinctive spaces and new formats

Independent hotels have consolidated their position within the MICE segment by focusing on specialisation and flexibility. Their strength lies not in volume, but in the ability to adapt spaces and services to the specific needs of each event. Direct management and agile decision-making make it possible to respond quickly to executive meetings, incentives and small-format gatherings. In an increasingly segmented corporate market, these properties offer identity, personalisation and distinctive proposals for organisers seeking unique and well-executed experiences.

Text: Editorial Team Photography: Archive



Opening in Lisbon with a strong local identity

The Ivens, Autograph Collection has reinforced its positioning as an urban boutique hotel with new experiences linked to the history of Portuguese explorers. Although part of a soft brand, it maintains independent management and a strong local character, with spaces designed for small gatherings and private events.

A restored palace in Seville

Casa del Rey Moro Hotel Boutique consolidates its positioning following a comprehensive renovation. Set within a 16th-century palace house, it embraces a concept of understated luxury and personalised cultural experiences, with historic courtyards adapted for exclusive meetings.



Gastronomy at the heart of the Pyrenees

Hotel Terra Bonansa reinforces its positioning as a gastronomic destination with a new seasonal menu centred on locally sourced produce. Its small scale and natural surroundings make it a compelling option for small-format incentive programmes.



A hotel with a renewed image in Paris

Hôtel des Grands Boulevards has updated its common areas with a more functional design for small-scale corporate events. This boutique hotel, set within an 18th-century building, balances classical aesthetics with contemporary uses.

A new life for a Catalan masía

Mas de Torrent Hotel & Spa has expanded its offering with private villas and wellness spaces. While already established in the luxury segment, it retains an independent spirit and strengthens its appeal for corporate retreats and strategic meetings.



Alpine refuge with a sustainable focus

Arlberg Hospiz Hotel is driving new sustainability policies in its daily operations. This historic Alpine hotel combines family tradition with infrastructure adapted to small corporate groups in a high-mountain setting.

Strategic communication with a more human-centred approach

Tailor-made strategies for a highly specialised sector

Text: Editorial Team – Photos: MUNKA

Munka is a consulting agency specialised in communication and public relations within the tourism sector. Its activity focuses on the positioning of destinations, hotel chains and companies linked to the travel industry, through strategies oriented towards media visibility, content generation and brand reputation management.

Based in Madrid, it works with both national and international destinations and companies in the MICE field, adapting each project to the client's objectives. Its boutique approach, grounded in proximity and the value of human expertise, enables tailor-made actions and a specialised, close communication style.

We speak with Sara Díez to understand her perspective on tourism communication and the current evolution of the sector.

1. From your experience leading Munka, how has communication around tourism destinations changed in a context marked by information overload and global competition?

In recent years, the transformation has been remarkable, driven largely by the emergence of new tools provided by social media and digital communication. We have now entered a far more strategic and segmented environment. Mass communication campaigns have been left behind in favour of a strong shift towards emotional communication. Destinations that were once strongly positioned now face far greater competition, which forces us to develop a deeper understanding of the traveller in order to build robust messages that help anticipate their motivations.

Today, inspiration and travel decisions are born in the digital space, which is why communication on social media has become an essential tool for destinations to build narratives and connect emotionally with their audiences.

Destinations are no longer competing only to attract visitors, but to position their narrative. What do you consider essential today to build a strong and distinctive storytelling approach?

That's right. Tourism communication has evolved towards a much more agile and visual model, where short-form content—such as reels, short videos or dynamic pieces—plays a key role compared to more traditional formats like the press release. Without di-

minishing the strategic value of the latter, the reality is that today's traveller consumes inspiration quickly, almost instantly, and on platforms where the ability to capture attention within seconds is decisive.

For this reason, destinations need to adapt their narrative to these new codes: more direct messaging, more creative formats and a stronger ability to create impact in a very short time. Ultimately, we no longer create content—we create stories..

Has tourism and corporate communication evolved towards more experiential models, less focused solely on the product?

In the same way, hotel communication has also evolved towards a much more experiential approach. We used to promote facilities, services and categories; today, we sell emotions. The hotel chains we work with at Munka are mainly in the luxury segment, and without a doubt, the differentiating value lies in the meticulous care of the guest in every detail. But it is no longer enough to communicate experiences; they must be designed from the very first moment, from the instant the guest crosses the threshold: the scent of the reception, the lobby napkin, the concierge service...

Communication, in this sense, plays a fundamental role. It must be a faithful reflection of that sophisticated experience, consistent and capable of conveying that unique feeling of being made to feel special at all times.

Online reputation and digital conversation increasingly influence travellers' decisions. How do you manage this new balance between media, social networks and influencers within your communication strategy?

For communication agencies, this has undoubtedly been one of the biggest challenges. The digital era not only demands constant listening, but also an almost immediate capacity to respond. This has completely transformed the way teams work: we no longer operate with linear structures or long planning cycles, but with much more agile, cross-functional and real-time dynamics.

From a strategic perspective, what we do is integrate traditional media, social networks and influencers into a single ecosystem. It is not about choosing between them, because all are essential, and the media always provide a level of rigour and credibility that can sometimes be harder to find in social networks. For this reason,

it is crucial to carry out a thorough selection of the profiles and influencers who give voice to each of our brands.

What role do specialised media play today compared to the rise of content creators in destination and hotel communication?

Specialised media remain essential, especially in segments such as luxury and premium tourism. As I mentioned earlier, they bring a level of credibility and authority that content creators still find harder to convey. Creators, on the other hand, offer closeness and accessibility, allowing us to connect with audiences in a much more direct way—particularly younger travellers, who consume more social media and less traditional press.

Each plays an important role within our strategy. While media are indispensable for building strong brand positioning, content creators deliver the engagement we need. When properly combined, they become a key driver of success.

Many tourism brands aim to position themselves around values such as sustainability or authenticity. How can we ensure these messages are perceived as genuine commitment rather than rhetoric?

It is true that these are highly trending values and already part of many leading tourism brands' messaging. However, today's traveller has a much more informed perspective and can easily detect when a message is superficial.

At Munka, we advocate for responsible communication and understand that storytelling and campaigns must be backed by real actions; otherwise, there is a serious risk of audience rejection. In this sense, it is essential to ensure that marketing and communication strategies are coherent, based on meaningful actions and clear, truthful messages. That is the only way to achieve genuine authenticity and sustainability for a brand.

In a period of sector transformation, what communication trends do you think will shape tourism promotion in the coming years?

Personalisation of content will play a decisive role. It is no longer about designing generic campaigns for destinations, but about creating highly segmented micro-stories: purely cultural itineraries, foodie content that brings us closer to local gastronomy, immersive experiences for premium travellers...

Of course, these actions are fully transferable to tour operators, travel agencies, hotel chains and airlines, as we are witnessing an increasingly strategic integration of channels. In this way, a single launch can combine a feature in a specialised travel publication with a collaboration from a content



Sara Díez, Director of Munka

creator who experiences the journey first-hand and translates it into short, aspirational social media pieces, showing the full experience from boarding to arrival.

You also manage the communication of the Mesa del Turismo. What role is this organisation playing in today's sector debate, and what are its main communication priorities?

Mesa del Turismo de España is playing an essential role. In recent years it has experienced significant growth, becoming the voice of the entire sector at a particularly complex and transformative moment. It brings together Spain's most important tourism companies and groups, and the fact that they can share concerns and debate issues that affect them all is of invaluable importance.

At Munka, our work has always been to position it as a strong and rigorous interlocutor. We currently focus on communicating clear messages about the challenges facing tourism and highlighting its economic and social impact, strengthening its media presence and its capacity to influence, while generating valuable content and facilitating dialogue between the public and private sectors.

The rise in fuel prices has reopened the debate on costs and operational efficiency

Text: Editorial Team – Photos: Archive



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Fuel can account for up to one third of an airline's operating costs.”

The rise in fuel prices is once again emerging as one of the main challenges for airlines in 2026. According to analyses from International Air Transport Association, jet fuel remains one of the largest components of operating costs, forcing carriers to adjust planning and capacity. Oil price volatility, combined with route diversions in certain regions, is increasing average consumption on some long-haul flights between Europe and Asia.

In this context, several European airlines have stepped up the use of more efficient next-generation aircraft and are reviewing frequencies on lower-load routes. There is also growing optimisation of payload management and adjustments in cruise speeds to reduce fuel burn—standard measures when fuel prices rise. Operational reports from Eurocontrol also indicate that diversions along certain corridors are increasing flight times, directly impacting energy consumption.

For the corporate travel market, the impact translates into greater attention to efficiency and advance planning. Airlines are seeking to avoid abrupt fare increases, but the energy environment is driving gradual adjustments, particularly on intercontinental routes. At the same time, the sector continues to invest in the development of sustainable aviation fuels, seen as a key tool to reduce dependence on jet fuel prices in the medium term.



Istanbul reinforces its role as a hub between Europe and Asia

Istanbul Airport continues to consolidate its position as one of the main connection nodes between Europe and Asia. Its combination of operational capacity, strategic location and an extensive route network has enabled it to absorb part of the traffic redistributed by adjustments in traditional corridors. Turkish Airlines has increased frequencies to key Asian destinations and strengthened connections with European capitals, facilitating more flexible itineraries for corporate travellers.

This repositioning also responds to the need to diversify stopover points in intercontinental travel. For business travel organisers, Istanbul offers competitive connection times and airport infrastructure designed to handle large transit volumes. The trend points towards greater prominence of hubs capable of adapting quickly to geopolitical shifts, consolidating a more distributed connectivity model between Europe and Asia.



Istanbul Airport

Airline alliances boost corporate connectivity

Text: Editorial Team – Photos: Archive

Star Alliance, Oneworld and SkyTeam are intensifying schedule coordination and codeshare agreements to improve intercontinental connectivity. This strategy aims to provide more flexible alternatives in response to ongoing changes in long-haul route structures and growing demand from the corporate travel segment.

Industry analyses from publications such as Flight-Global and CAPA – Centre for Aviation indicate that this trend allows airlines to redistribute passenger flows and offer more connection options without the need to open new direct routes. For business travel, these alliances enable more efficient itineraries, reduced waiting times and greater flexibility in managing stopovers when operational changes occur.

Coordination between carriers also extends to enhanced corporate services, shared lounge access and deeper integration of loyalty programmes. In a context of evolving global connectivity, airline alliances are consolidating their role as a key mechanism for maintaining stable travel flows between Europe and Asia.



Reconfiguration of routes between Europe and Asia

The escalation of tensions in the Middle East is forcing airlines to rethink routes between Europe and Asia, with a direct impact on corporate connectivity. The intermittent closure of airspaces and the need to avoid risk-designated zones have disrupted one of the most heavily used intercontinental corridors, traditionally channelled through hubs such as Dubai, Doha or Abu Dhabi. For business travel, where predictability and connection times are critical, these changes are prompting operational adjustments and new strategies from airlines.

Several European and Asian carriers have opted for more northerly routes, increasing the use of the polar corridor as well as airspace over the Caucasus and Central Asia. These diversions often result in longer flight times and higher fuel consumption, but they allow airlines to maintain operational continuity while avoiding unstable areas. At the same time, some operators are strengthening connections via established European hubs such as Frankfurt, Paris-Charles de Gaulle or Istanbul, which act as redistribution points towards East Asia through codeshare agreements and adjusted frequencies.

Within this reshaping of air corridors, the Caucasus has taken on a more relevant role, with Baku emerging as a reference point on routes connecting Europe with Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Azerbaijan's geographic position, located outside the main tension zones and within a relatively stable air corridor, has led to an increase in overflights along this axis. Some airlines are using this route as an alternative to optimise travel times and avoid longer diversions via northern or southern paths, progressively consolidating the Caucasus airspace as an operational complement to major traditional hubs. While it does not replace established nodes, it adds flexibility and helps diversify intercontinental connectivity in a shifting geopolitical context.

Istanbul has gained prominence in this environment thanks to its geographic position and the capacity of its airport to absorb additional traffic. The Turkish Airlines network, which connects multiple Asian destinations with Europe in competitive transit times, is

consolidating its role as an operational alternative for corporate travellers. There is also a growing importance of South Asian hubs such as Delhi or Mumbai, used as intermediate points to redistribute traffic towards Southeast Asia and the Far East.

Another trend is the reinforcement of direct flights between major European cities and key Asian destinations. Some airlines are prioritising non-stop routes to Tokyo, Seoul or Singapore to reduce dependence on intermediate hubs. Although these operations require greater planning and long-haul fleet availability, they offer clear advantages for the corporate market by reducing uncertainty and transit times.

In this scenario, connectivity between Europe and Asia is becoming more diversified and less concentrated along a single geographical axis. For business travel, this translates into a more flexible network, but also into the need for greater advance planning. Airlines' ability to adapt routes, strengthen alliances and redistribute traffic will be key to maintaining the efficiency of intercontinental mobility in an evolving geopolitical landscape.



Airlines and connectivity

Industry news

Airlines are facing a scenario shaped by operational adjustments, geopolitical shifts and evolving demands from corporate travel. The reconfiguration of routes, the strengthening of alliances and the selective opening of new connections are reshaping the map of international connectivity. For companies and event organisers, schedule reliability, efficient stopovers and airlines' capacity to adapt are becoming decisive factors. In this context, strategic decisions by carriers have a direct impact on the planning of business travel and on the competitiveness of destinations.



Iberia launches Newark service and expands its footprint in the New York area

Iberia will launch a new daily route between Madrid and Newark Liberty International Airport on 29 March, strengthening its presence in the New York metropolitan area and consolidating the role of the Airbus A321XLR as a core asset in its long-haul expansion strategy. The airline already operates two daily flights to JFK, so the addition of Newark significantly expands its offering in one of the most competitive transatlantic markets.

The choice of the A321XLR is particularly strategic. The aircraft enables transatlantic routes with a more contained cost structure and a configuration designed for high-frequency markets with a mixed demand profile, where corporate travel remains a key component. From a MICE and business travel perspective, the new route enhances the connectivity of the Madrid hub and provides an additional gateway to the New York area for corporate travellers, trade fairs and meetings. It also reflects a broader shift among European carriers towards more selective routes, greater fleet efficiency and a focus on connections that balance volume, profitability and operational flexibility.

Lufthansa City Airlines expands its deployment from Frankfurt

Lufthansa City Airlines has begun operations from Frankfurt Airport, extending the reach of the subsidiary created to strengthen the group's short-haul network. The initial rollout includes routes to Manchester, Berlin, Hamburg and Bremen, with further domestic German links such as Düsseldorf, Cologne/Bonn and Hanover set to follow. The move carries a clear strategic purpose: to better feed long-haul operations and reinforce the competitiveness of Frankfurt as a hub amid growing pressure on costs and performance.

More than a simple network expansion, the launch from Frankfurt highlights how the Lufthansa Group is reorganising parts of its network structure. Lufthansa City Airlines had already started operations from Munich and is now becoming a more visible instrument within the group's wider ecosystem.

For corporate traffic, this translates into more connection options, improved coordination between short- and long-haul services, and a more finely tuned offering in markets with strong business demand. From an editorial perspective, the development reflects a broader industry trend: major airlines are reshaping brands and subsidiaries to protect margins, support hub performance and maintain international connectivity while preserving operational flexibility.



TAP Air Portugal strengthens its network in Spain and expands international connectivity for summer 2026

TAP Air Portugal will increase its presence in the Spanish market during the summer 2026 season, operating a total of 179 weekly direct flights between 12 Spanish cities and Lisbon, its main operational hub. The schedule, starting on 28 March, combines year-round routes with new seasonal connections that reinforce bilateral connectivity and access to the airline's intercontinental network. New additions include Palma de Mallorca and Ibiza, with seven weekly frequencies each, Alicante with six weekly flights and Menorca, operating five times per week.

The year-round operation remains strong from Madrid (49 weekly flights), Barcelona (42), Seville (17), Málaga (16), Valencia (15) and Bilbao (7), alongside services from Gran Canaria and Tenerife South, where TAP Air Portugal remains the only scheduled carrier offering direct flights to Lisbon. This network reinforces the importance of the Spanish market as one of the most significant for the airline within Europe.

As part of its international expansion, TAP Air Portugal will also launch a new route between Lisbon and Curitiba on 2 July, with three weekly flights operated by Airbus A330-200. The airline will additionally increase frequencies to Porto Alegre to four weekly services, further enhancing connectivity between Spain, Portugal and Brazil during the summer season.



Air France increases its commitment to New York with up to 11 daily flights

Air France will reinforce its summer offering between Paris-Charles de Gaulle and New York, reaching up to eleven daily flights across JFK and Newark. This decision turns the Paris–New York axis into one of the strongest in its network and confirms that the premium transatlantic market remains a strategic priority for the airline. The increase is also accompanied by onboard connectivity improvements, including the rollout of high-speed Wi-Fi on part of the operation.

For business mobility, the move has a clear implication: more frequencies mean greater flexibility, better-optimised return journeys and improved alignment with demanding corporate schedules. In a market where timetables are as critical as the product itself, operational density becomes a competitive advantage in its own right. It also reinforces Paris as a major European gateway to the US East Coast.

From an editorial perspective, the story goes beyond capacity growth: it illustrates how a major airline is concentrating supply where corporate and premium traffic continues to sustain both profitability and international relevance—essentially a strategy of selective volume on a high-value route.



Wizz Air opens a new direct connection between Madrid and Gdansk

Wizz Air continues to expand its presence in the Spanish market with the launch of a new direct route between Madrid and Gdansk, one of the key destinations in northern Poland. The connection, which will operate several weekly frequencies, strengthens the airline's network between Spain and Central and Eastern Europe, responding to growing demand for direct routes to cities with strong economic and cultural dynamism.

The new service adds to existing connections between Gdansk and other Spanish airports such as Barcelona, Alicante, Málaga, Palma de Mallorca and Tenerife. With this expansion, the carrier consolidates its presence in the Spanish market and reinforces the positioning of the Polish destination within its growth strategy. For business travel, the route offers a direct alternative to a city with an expanding port, logistics and technology ecosystem.

The Madrid–Gdansk connection reflects Wizz Air's operational model, based on linking cities with strong demand potential without relying on major hubs. This strategy helps reduce travel times and improve flexibility for corporate mobility. The new route therefore contributes to diversifying connectivity from Madrid and broadening travel options between Spain and Northern Europe.



Turkish Airlines strengthens its network towards Asia and consolidates its Istanbul hub

Turkish Airlines continues to expand its network of connections to Asia through increased frequencies and optimised scheduling on strategic routes. The airline is reinforcing its Istanbul hub as a key bridge between Europe and Asia, consolidating its role in intercontinental traffic. This growth reflects evolving demand in the corporate segment, particularly in markets linked to business activity between the two continents, where direct connectivity and operational reliability are essential for planning professional travel.

The carrier has adjusted flight timings to improve connection windows and enable more efficient itineraries for business travellers. In addition, the strengthening of codeshare agreements is expanding the network of destinations accessible from Europe towards East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. This strategy increases operational flexibility, enhances the corporate passenger experience and reduces transit times on intercontinental routes—key factors for trips that require optimised schedules and minimal layovers.

The development of the network is supported by the operational capacity of Istanbul Airport, an infrastructure designed to handle higher traffic volumes and manage complex connections. The hub's geographic position facilitates balanced itineraries between Western Europe, the Middle East and Asia. With these measures, Turkish Airlines strengthens its position in the corporate market and reinforces its competitiveness as a key player in Europe–Asia connectivity.

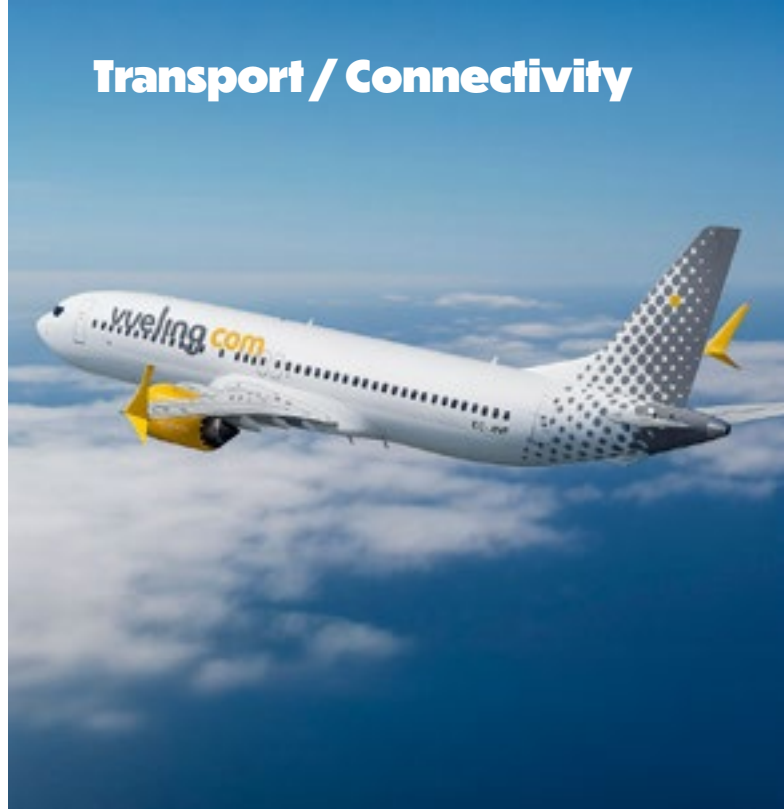


Vueling reinforces organ transport operations in Spain

Vueling has consolidated its role in urgent organ transportation in Spain through its collaboration with the National Transplant Organization (ONT), a partnership active since 2013. During this period, the airline has participated in the transfer of more than 1,100 organs, highlighting the critical importance of air transport within the donation and transplantation chain. In the past year alone, the carrier has transported over 100 organs domestically, making it the airline with the highest number of such operations in the country and reinforcing its role within the healthcare system.

Organ transport requires immediate coordination and specific protocols to ensure viability. When a request is activated, the airline initiates an internal procedure that prioritises boarding, coordinates crew operations and minimises connection times. This type of mission is particularly relevant over distances exceeding 300 kilometres, where air transport significantly reduces travel times compared with road logistics and improves the likelihood of successful medical outcomes.

It is estimated that one in every six donated organs in Spain is transported by air, underscoring the importance of domestic connectivity. Vueling's operational network enables these transfers between autonomous communities, particularly between major hospital centres, contributing to the efficiency of the national transplant system and optimising a logistics chain in which every minute is critical.



LEVEL reinforces its transatlantic operations from Barcelona

LEVEL continues to consolidate its long-haul strategy by strengthening its transatlantic operations from its main base in Barcelona. The airline has adjusted frequencies to key destinations in the Americas, particularly on routes with strong corporate and leisure demand, aiming to optimise connectivity between Europe and the American continent. This planning reflects sustained growth in intercontinental traffic and the recovery of medium- and long-haul business travel.

The carrier maintains its focus on strategic routes such as New York, Boston, Miami and Los Angeles, where corporate demand is once again gaining relevance. The reinforcement of these connections allows for greater schedule flexibility and improved onward connectivity for travellers arriving from other European markets via Barcelona. This operation is supported by its integration within the International Airlines Group, which enables commercial agreements and coordination with other group airlines.

With this strategy, LEVEL aims to strengthen its position in the cost-efficient transatlantic segment, combining competitive fares with direct long-haul flights. The development of the Barcelona hub thus reinforces its role as a key gateway between Europe and the Americas.



The destination is not the end

When the car becomes part of the experience

Text: José A. Muñoz – Photos: Archive and Europcar

In meetings and incentive tourism, mobility has become a strategic element. It is no longer simply about moving between venues, but about gaining the freedom to adapt programmes, improvise, and make the most of opportunities beyond the planned itinerary. The concept **“To get lost is the way. There are places you can only reach by car”**, which sits at the heart of Europcar’s philosophy, captures this new way of understanding business travel. The ability to move independently allows for more dynamic experiences, connecting different locations and turning the journey itself into part of the corporate programme.

Network capillarity is key to this model. Europcar operates 190 offices in Spain, located in airports, train stations and urban centres, making it easy to start or end journeys at different points across the country. This flexibility is particularly valuable for MICE programmes that combine multiple cities or less accessible locations. In addition, its international presence—more than 3,300 offices across 130 countries—extends this mobility model to global corporate travel, ensuring consistency and operational continuity worldwide.



La Rioja Alavesa

Meetings among vineyards

Contemporary wineries and small boutique hotels have turned this region into a regular setting for incentives and executive meetings. Spaces such as Ysios Winery or Marqués de Riscal City of Wine offer meeting rooms, panoramic terraces and private wine and gastronomy experiences. The dispersion of these venues across towns such as Laguardia, Elciego and Samaniego makes car travel essential to connect tastings, working lunches and technical visits. Moving between vineyards also adds an experiential layer to the incentive, enabling the design of dynamic programmes with multiple stops and informal gatherings throughout the day.

Sierra de Tramuntana

Incentives with a landscape

In Mallorca, the Sierra de Tramuntana offers an ideal setting for exclusive meetings. Historic hotels such as La Residencia, A Belmond Hotel, Mallorca or estates converted into event venues such as Son Marroig allow gatherings to be organised with views over the Mediterranean. The road connecting Valldemossa, Deià and Sóller brings together panoramic restaurants and spaces for team-building activities. Car travel makes it possible to navigate this mountain route, adapt schedules and discover less conventional spots for informal sessions or outdoor presentations, offering greater logistical flexibility and privacy for professional groups.

Ribera del Duero

Networking among wineries

Wine tourism remains one of the most effective formats for incentive travel. In the Ribera del Duero, wineries such as Bodegas Protos or Abadía Retuerta LeDomaine combine meeting spaces with private tasting areas. The distances between Peñafiel, Aranda de Duero and Quintanilla de Onésimo require road travel, allowing technical visits, tastings and corporate dinners to be integrated across different locations. The journey between vineyards becomes part of the programme itself, encouraging group interaction along the way.

Costa da Morte

Team experiences facing the Atlantic

The Galician coast offers an authentic setting for corporate programmes. Locations such as Faro de Finisterre or distinctive venues like Parador Costa da Morte are used for small meetings and team-building activities. The dispersion between Muxía, Camariñas and Laxe makes road mobility essential. Car travel enables gastronomic routes, informal gatherings in fishing harbours and outdoor activities, adapting the programme to the group's rhythm and the Atlantic landscape.



Desierto de Tabernas

Incentives with character

Desierto de Tabernas offers a singular landscape for events and corporate presentations. Spaces such as Fort Bravo Texas Hollywood or Oasys MiniHollywood allow team dynamics and themed activities to be organised within cinematic settings. The distance between these venues and the city of Almería makes road travel essential. Car mobility enables the combination of meetings, outdoor activities and presentations in open-air locations, reinforcing the sense of exclusivity within the incentive experience.



This model of mobility is also being shaped by the shift towards more sustainable fleets. Europcar is increasingly incorporating electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, enabling access to low-emission zones and ensuring operational continuity in urban centres where conferences and meetings take place.

In addition, the option of selecting premium brands such as Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz or Tesla adds an experiential layer to incentive programmes, where the journey itself becomes part of the experience. In today's MICE landscape, the car is no longer just a means of transport, but a tool that expands the destination. Many meaningful encounters emerge off the planned route, in spaces revealed only through the freedom of movement and the possibility of exploration.

Spaces & Events

Events shaping the European congress agenda

Text: Editorial Team – Photos: Archive

IMEX Frankfurt maintains its leadership as a global trade fair for the sector

IMEX Frankfurt continues to be one of the main meeting points for the international meetings industry. The event brings together thousands of MICE professionals each year, including congress organisers, destinations, hotels and specialised suppliers.

Held at Messe Frankfurt, the fair has consolidated its role as a key platform for generating business opportunities and analysing the trends shaping the future evolution of the sector.

Over the course of three days, thousands of pre-scheduled professional meetings take place between international buyers and representatives of destinations and companies from across the industry. Alongside its commercial programme, IMEX Frankfurt also features an extensive educational agenda with conferences and training sessions focused on topics such as sustainability, technological innovation and event experience design.

The fair has therefore become a privileged observatory for understanding the transformations taking place within the global meetings industry.

IFEMA Madrid expands its commitment to international congresses

IFEMA Madrid continues to strengthen its positioning within the international congress market. The institution has intensified its strategy to attract large-scale sector events, particularly those linked to technology, health-care and sustainability. This move responds to growing demand for infrastructures capable of hosting hybrid meetings and managing increasingly complex logistical requirements.

The expansion of digital services and the enhancement of modular spaces form part of this evolution. IFEMA Madrid has also increased the flexibility of its halls to enable simultaneous exhibition and congress configurations. This adaptability is especially important for events that combine networking, content programmes and technical demonstrations.

The Madrid venue is therefore consolidating its role within the European MICE circuit. The combination of air connectivity, hotel capacity and versatile event spaces strengthens its appeal for international organisers seeking venues capable of handling large-scale events.



ExCeL London strengthens its capacity for hybrid events

The convention centre ExCeL London has expanded its technological infrastructure in response to the growth of hybrid events. The investment focuses on digital connectivity, audiovisual studios and adaptable spaces for live broadcasting. This evolution reflects increasing demand for congresses that combine in-person attendance with remote participation.

The venue has integrated new audiovisual production solutions into its day-to-day operations, reducing setup times and facilitating the organisation of events with digital components. The flexibility of the space also enables the division of areas for simultaneous sessions.

ExCeL London is therefore reinforcing its positioning as a venue for international congresses. Its technological adaptation complements its ability to host large-scale events, consolidating its role within the European meetings market.

MiCo Milano Convention Centre focuses on large-scale congresses

MiCo Milano Convention Centre has intensified its activity following the recovery of the international events calendar. The venue is attracting medical, technology and corporate congresses that require large auditoriums and integrated exhibition spaces.

The structure of the centre allows plenary sessions to be combined with networking and exhibition areas, reflecting the sector's shift towards more dynamic event formats. The capacity of the main auditorium and the modularity of its meeting rooms facilitate the organisation of complex events. MiCo Milano Convention Centre is therefore strengthening its position within the European market. The venue's infrastructure and the city's connectivity continue to reinforce its appeal for international organisers seeking versatile and well-connected event destinations.

Palacio de Congressos de València strengthens its international congress activity

Palacio de Congressos de València continues to consolidate its position within the European congress market. The venue has intensified its efforts to attract events linked to technology, healthcare and sustainability—sectors that require large auditoriums and modular spaces for parallel meetings. This evolution reflects the growth of highly specialised mid-sized professional gatherings.

The building's configuration allows plenary sessions to be combined with networking areas and technical exhibition spaces. This flexibility facilitates the organisation of congresses that integrate scientific content with business activity. The city's air connectivity and the proximity of its hotel infrastructure further strengthen its appeal for international organisers.

Palacio de Congressos de València therefore maintains its role within the European circuit of congress venues. The versatility of its spaces and its experience in hosting international events continue to reinforce its positioning within the MICE market.

Major European venues are reinforcing their strategic role as host locations for leading trade fairs and congresses, driving international MICE activity and strengthening the global business events ecosystem.

MiCo Milano Convention Centre





Palexpo Ginebra (Salón del Automóvil)

Palexpo promotes flexible spaces for scientific congresses

Palexpo has strengthened its offering for scientific and medical congresses, a growing segment within the MICE market. The reorganisation of its spaces allows configurations tailored to plenary sessions, technical exhibitions and parallel meetings. This evolution responds to demand for events requiring flexible layouts, advanced technical capabilities and integrated logistics for international attendees.

The venue's proximity to the airport and Geneva's international connectivity make it a strategic location for global professional gatherings. Palexpo regularly hosts major events such as Watches and Wonders Geneva, which brings together leading international watchmaking brands, and European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition, focused on business aviation with a strong professional audience. These events highlight the venue's ability to manage specialised trade fairs with complex technical requirements.

The venue has also historically hosted the Geneva International Motor Show, one of the automotive industry's most influential events for decades, alongside professional fairs linked to innovation, industry and services. This legacy consolidates Palexpo as a venue prepared to host large-scale events and highly specialised gatherings, combining exhibition halls with auditoriums and adaptable modular meeting rooms.

Palexpo therefore continues to position itself as a leading venue for specialised congresses. The integration of exhibition areas and conference facilities enables the organisation of complex events within a single space. This versatility reinforces its role within the international calendar, particularly in scientific, technological and professional sectors that require highly adaptable infrastructure.

Paris Expo Porte de Versailles

Paris Expo Porte de Versailles has reinforced its position within the European events calendar following the hosting of Viva Technology. The event brought together startups, major corporations and digital sector professionals, with strong international participation and a high volume of business meetings.

The venue’s configuration allowed exhibition areas to be combined with conference stages and dedicated networking zones. This structure supports the simultaneous development of presentations, technology demonstrations and B2B meetings. The modularity of the halls is key for events that integrate content and exhibition within a single space.

Paris Expo Porte de Versailles therefore confirms the importance of versatile infrastructure within the MICE market. It strengthens its role as a leading venue for international innovation and technology events, reinforcing Paris as one of Europe’s foremost destinations for professional congresses.

the future”, the forum will address issues such as destination governance, the humanisation of hospitality, female leadership in the sector and the integration of artificial intelligence in tourism management. The programme will combine panel discussions, interviews and networking spaces designed to foster reflection on the evolution of Granada’s tourism model and its international positioning.

A key focus will be placed on the role of female leadership in shaping the destination, examining its influence across academia, public administration, tourism promotion and hospitality as pillars of the city’s competitiveness. The event will also include the Venusitas Awards, recognising professionals contributing to the development of Granada’s tourism ecosystem.

Proceeds from the forum will be allocated to the social initiatives of the AEDH Foundation, reinforcing the collaborative and socially engaged nature of an event designed to strengthen public–private cooperation within the tourism sector.

Granada hosts the 5th AEDH-Venus Forum

The V Foro AEDH-Venus will take place at the Gran Hotel Luna de Granada, bringing together tourism professionals, institutional representatives and academic stakeholders to analyse the strategic challenges facing the destination from a forward-looking perspective.

Under the theme “Shared leadership: tourism building

The forum will address destination governance, female leadership and tourism innovation, analysing the strategic challenges facing the sector and the evolution of Granada’s tourism model.

Forum AEDH-Venus



MUBIL Mobility Expo consolidates its international profile and investor interest at Ficoba

MUBIL Mobility Expo has reinforced its international profile and investor appeal at Ficoba Exhibition Centre, consolidating its position as one of Southern Europe's most specialised professional gatherings in sustainable mobility.

The fifth edition brought together around 1,800 industry professionals, maintaining attendance levels from the previous year and confirming a model focused on high-quality, technically oriented participants.

A key highlight was the growth of the hosted buyers programme, which has become increasingly central to the event's strategy. The fair attracted institutions and companies with a combined investment capacity of €450 million—more than double the 2024 figure—reflecting the strong business potential generated through networking and industry matchmaking.

Internationalisation was another defining axis. The introduction of the "Partner Country" initiative featured France in 2026, with participation from twel-

ve French companies through clusters such as ID4Mobility, NextMove and CARA, strengthening cross-border cooperation in advanced mobility ecosystems. International attendance also reached nearly 10%, reinforcing the event's global outlook.

Beyond the exhibition area, the conference programme addressed key topics including electric mobility, value chain transformation, energy infrastructure, autonomous mobility, artificial intelligence applied to transport, cybersecurity and hydrogen development.

Supported by MUBIL, the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa, the Basque Government and the Basque Energy Agency, MUBIL Mobility Expo continues to establish itself as a professional platform for business generation, international cooperation and the future development of sustainable mobility in Europe.





BTL 2026 strengthens its international positioning with record participation

BTL – Better Tourism Lisbon Travel Market has reinforced its international positioning with record attendance, consolidating its role within the European tourism calendar. Held in Lisbon, the 36th edition welcomed approximately 85,000 visitors, marking the highest figure in its history and confirming its status as one of Portugal's key tourism decision-making platforms. The strong turnout reflected both public interest and a growing presence of industry professionals.

Over five days, the event stood out for its strong commercial dimension, with more than 300 active direct sales points and significant contracting activity. The diversity of national and international destinations, combined with exclusive promotional campaigns, drove business generation and energised activity across the venue, reinforcing the fair's hybrid role between promotion, sales and professional networking.

The edition featured 1,700 exhibitors and 125 international destinations, with international participation growing by 20%. The fair occupied five exhibition halls and a total area of 60,000 square metres, underlining its appeal as

a strategic platform for destinations, companies and institutions. Growth was also recorded across key segments such as hospitality, services and distribution, strengthening the event's transversal nature.

The Hosted Buyers programme, developed with the support of TAP Air Portugal and Turismo de Portugal, facilitated more than 3,800 meetings between over 200 international buyers from 42 source markets and more than 500 participating companies. This scale of business matchmaking reinforces BTL – Better Tourism Lisbon Travel Market as a key connection point between supply and demand, consolidating Lisbon's position as a major hub for global tourism meetings.



Agencies & Tour Operations

Strategic intermediation to design value-added experiences

Text: Editorial Team – Photos: Archive



The traveller prioritises agencies with support in an uncertain international environment

The geopolitical context and the volatility of air transport are reshaping traveller behaviour in 2026. Planning—especially for long-haul journeys—is increasingly seen as an investment that requires guarantees and professional support. Cancellations, route changes and operational restrictions have highlighted the importance of agencies capable of providing rapid solutions and genuine assistance in the event of disruption.

Recent tensions in the Middle East and their impact on one of the world's main international air corridors have further reinforced this trend. In this environment, agen-

cies with consolidated structures, in-house teams and strong international relationships are gaining prominence over more limited operational models. Continuous service and responsiveness are becoming decisive factors for companies and travellers seeking to minimise risk.

Twenty-four-hour assistance with specialised staff, end-to-end support and comprehensive insurance recommendations are part of this evolving travel approach. Companies operating under a model based on expert advice and direct service, such as those promoted by Pangea, highlight that trust is no longer defined solely by the destination, but by the professional support that accompanies the client throughout the journey. In a changing environment, security and responsible planning are becoming key priorities for today's traveller.

DIT Gestión reinforces training and networking among independent agencies in Gipuzkoa

More than one hundred travel agents from Spain and Portugal took part in Gipuzkoa in a new edition of the professional meeting organised by DIT Gestión, an event combining training, networking and destination-based experiences. Held in Oiartzun, the gathering consolidates a format focused on direct contact between agencies and suppliers, as well as the updating of tools and commercial strategies.

The programme included training sessions aimed at improving day-to-day operations, alongside the presentation of technological innovations designed to optimise processes and increase efficiency. Various industry partners also took part, sharing their proposals for the year ahead, while the group's management outlined its main strategic priorities for 2026.

Beyond the professional content, the event incorporated activities linked to the local territory, including visits to producers and gastronomic experiences that strengthened relationships among attendees. This approach—combining business and destination knowledge—has become one of the defining features of the meeting.

The strong turnout confirms the growing interest of the independent travel channel in this type of initiative. Management groups with broad market presence, such as DIT Gestión, continue to invest in in-person gatherings that reinforce sector cohesion and knowledge exchange among agencies.

Incentive travel is evolving towards experiences with emotional and strategic impact

Incentive travel is entering 2026 with a shift in focus that goes beyond the destination itself to centre on the overall experience. This is highlighted in a new guide published by the incentive division of BCD Meetings & Events, which analyses the main trends reshaping this segment within the MICE market and its evolution towards more strategic proposals. The report positions incentive travel as a tool for motivation and recognition, capable of strengthening corporate culture and generating long-term impact on teams.

The study points to the consolidation of key factors such as proximity, return on investment, genuine sustainability and participant wellbeing, alongside the growing role of hotels as the core of the experience. It also highlights emerging trends, including increased

interest in lesser-known destinations, the rise of Asia as a competitive option in the premium segment, and the design of programmes linked to major international events. Personalisation is also gaining importance, with content tailored to the values and objectives of each organisation.

Beyond trends, the analysis signals a structural shift in corporate traveller expectations. The value of incentive travel no longer lies solely in the destination, but in its ability to create connection, recognition and shared memories among participants. The journey narrative, group cohesion and authenticity of activities are becoming key differentiators compared with more conventional offerings.

In this context, programmes are evolving towards more personalised experiences that integrate culture, gastronomy, nature or sport with a transformative approach. Concepts such as slow travel, holistic wellbeing and JOMO (“Joy of Missing Out”) are becoming part of the new standard. This trend favours less crowded schedules, more time for team connection and experiences with deeper meaning, marking a transition towards more conscious, sustainable and emotionally driven corporate travel models.



TUI Group strengthens its integrated model and improves results at the start of 2026

TUI Group has begun the year with positive booking trends and an improvement in operating profit, supported by a diversified product offering and the gradual reduction of seasonality. The company reports sustained demand across key European markets, with particularly strong growth in medium- and long-haul travel.

The group's integrated model—combining tour operating, hotels, cruises and experiences—remains one of its main competitive advantages. This strategy allows TUI Group to adjust supply in line with demand and improve control over the value chain. Its hotel division and activities business also continue to perform strongly, helping to balance the traditional package holiday segment.

For the agency and tour operating channel, this positioning confirms a broader industry trend towards operators with greater product control and adaptability. In a competitive environment, diversification and operational integration are becoming key tools to sustain profitability and respond to increasingly demanding travellers.

Viajes El Corte Inglés advances the transformation of its retail network

Viajes El Corte Inglés is continuing the gradual renovation of its office network in Spain, as part of a strategy to adapt the traditional travel agency model into a more experiential format. The company is focusing on more open spaces, greater technological integration and a consultative approach centred on specialist advice.

This evolution reflects a customer profile that combines digital booking with a demand for personalised support in complex, corporate or long-haul travel. In this context, physical agencies maintain their role as a trusted advisory point, particularly for high-value products.

The project reflects a wider sector trend: physical retail networks are evolving towards more specialised services, where professional advice plays a stronger role. For the distribution channel, office modernisation strengthens customer relationships and enhances the overall travel experience by combining technology with personalised service.

World2Meet expands internationally with its own product offering

World2Meet continues its international expansion through the development of proprietary product and the growth

of its presence in multiple markets. The company combines direct hotel contracting, tour operating programming and air connectivity, aiming to improve competitiveness across its offering.

The strengthening of its own bedbank and expansion of destination portfolios allows World2Meet to increase control over the value chain and offer more flexible solutions to agencies and customers. This integrated model reflects a growing industry trend towards reducing intermediaries and improving margins through proprietary product.

The move reinforces World2Meet's position as a global player in tourism, where the combination of distribution, programming and connectivity is becoming increasingly common in a market driven by efficiency and product differentiation.

BCD Travel forecasts higher corporate travel investment

The corporate travel market is showing signs of growth in 2026, with companies planning to increase investment in meetings and strategic travel. According to industry analyses shared by BCD Travel, organisations are once again prioritising face-to-face meetings as a tool for cohesion, business development and strengthening international relationships.

Increased spending is concentrated in high-value trips, internal meetings and incentive events. Efficient planning, return on investment measurement and risk management remain key decision factors. Travel policy optimisation and the search for suppliers offering greater budget control without compromising experience quality are also gaining importance.

For specialised agencies, this environment reinforces their role as corporate mobility consultants. Itinerary optimisation, supplier negotiation and disruption support are becoming increasingly valued services. In a more demanding context, professional advisory services are gaining weight within business travel, where safety, flexibility and operational efficiency are emerging as strategic priorities.

Kuoni Tumlare drives growth in the incentive segment

Kuoni Tumlare continues to strengthen its positioning in the MICE sector through the development of fully customised incentive programmes. The company focuses on tailor-made experiences that combine local culture, gastronomy and exclusive activities.

The growth reflects increasing demand for corporate travel with stronger emotional content. Companies are seeking proposals that enhance team motivation and create memorable experiences.

Kuoni Tumlare's strategy is based on collaboration with local suppliers and the design of itineraries aligned with each client's objectives. This approach confirms the shift in incentive travel towards more experiential formats, where creativity and personalisation become key differentiators.

Trip.com strengthens international expansion and global offering

Trip.com continues to consolidate its international growth, driven by the recovery of global tourism and the digitalisation of distribution. The platform has expanded its integrated ecosystem by combining flights, hotels and experiences.

Growth is supported by long-haul travel demand and an expanding presence across Europe and the Americas. The company maintains a strong foothold in Asia, which remains a key hub for international traffic flows.

For the sector, Trip.com reflects the growing influence of technology platforms in tourism distribution. The hybrid model between traditional agencies and digital platforms defines a landscape where specialisation and added value are increasingly decisive.

American Express Global Business Travel focuses on technology and efficiency

American Express Global Business Travel continues to strengthen its strategy based on digitalisation and operational efficiency. The company is developing technology-driven tools aimed at optimising corporate travel management and improving cost control.

Companies increasingly demand solutions that integrate booking, reporting and risk management within a single platform. This enables data-driven decision-making and improves spending efficiency.

The evolution of the market reinforces the role of TMCs as strategic partners. Beyond booking services, their function is increasingly centred on mobility optimisation and traveller safety. Technology is consolidating its position as a core pillar of modern travel management.



TravelPerk drives flexibility in corporate travel management

TravelPerk continues its growth with a focus on flexibility and digitalisation in business travel. The platform offers dynamic booking capabilities, configurable travel policies and spend control tools designed for companies that prioritise operational agility. Corporate travel is increasingly moving towards adaptable models with real-time modification capabilities.

Growth in business travel is driven by demand for solutions that enable rapid changes and improve traveller experience. Data integration and cost tracking are becoming essential for budget optimisation and strategic decision-making. In this context, technology plays a decisive role in planning meetings, events and international travel.



American Express Travel Agency in Rome

Agencies continue to be one of the key drivers of the MICE segment, leading projects and shaping trends that anticipate the future direction of the meetings and events industry.

American Express Global Business Travel drives the digitalisation of corporate travel

Corporate travel management is moving towards more technological and efficient models. American Express Global Business Travel continues to strengthen digital tools that allow companies to centralise bookings, control spending and improve the traveller experience. Data integration and real-time analytics are enabling better decision-making and optimising mobility policies.

This approach responds to growing demand for solutions that combine operational efficiency and safety. Digitalisation is therefore becoming a key element in the evolution of business travel, where strategic planning and budget control are gaining greater importance.

CWT focuses on more flexible corporate mobility models

Corporate travel management company CWT is strengthening its strategy centred on flexibility and cost optimisation. Companies are increasingly demanding adaptable itineraries and tools that allow travel arrangements to be modified quickly in response to operational changes.

This trend is accompanied by greater use of technology platforms and integrated support services. The scenario reinforces the role of TMCs as strategic partners, combining advisory services, risk management and efficiency in corporate mobility.

Hotel Santemar brings together the leading DMCs in the Spanish market in Santander

Santander hosted the 26th Annual Convention of SpainDMCs, held from 13 to 15 March at the Hotel Santemar, which became a key meeting point for MICE-specialised travel agencies. The event brought together industry professionals to analyse trends, exchange knowledge and strengthen the promotion of Spain as a destination for meetings, conferences and incentive travel.

The choice of Santander further enhances the city's positioning within the professional tourism segment. More than a decade after the association's previous meeting in the region, the return of SpainDMCs reflects Cantabria's evolution in infrastructure, services and offerings tailored to the corporate market. The location of the Hotel Santemar, next to El Sardinero beach, helped showcase the destination's appeal for professional gatherings.

The convention was supported by the City Council of Santander, the Government of Cantabria and the Santander Convention Bureau, along with local suppliers who contributed to presenting the destination's resources and its capacity to host international business tourism events.

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