



FITUR - PRESS RELEASE FORECASTS SEASON 2023

ACAVE travel agencies predict that Sales will continue to grow and exceed those of 2022

- **60% of the agencies surveyed expect travel bookings to continue growing in 2023 and be between 5 and 15% above 2022. Another 20% expect at least to match last year's results.**
- **The United States, Africa and Europe will continue to grow as preferred destinations for Spaniards, and the total opening of Asian destinations allows us to anticipate a high demand for travel, especially to Japan.**
- **The agencies are totally against the new regulations that require them to communicate daily to the Ministry of Interior the data of reservations in accommodation and car rental in Spanish territory, which is forcing them to hire more staff to deal with all these procedures.**

Madrid, Thursday, January 19, 2023.- ACAGE, the main employer of the travel agency sector in Spain and representing the interests of the sector of our country in ECTAA, European employer of travel agencies and tour operators, participates one more year in FITUR, and today has presented the results of a survey of travel forecasts for 2023, carried out among the 450 agencies associated with ACAGE throughout Spain.

Jordi Martí, president of ACAGE, has made a very positive balance of the end of 2022 and commented that *"last year's figures show that the recovery of the Sector is stable and consistent. 87% of the agencies surveyed say that they have now regained financial stability. They even tell us that practically no agency is already at risk due to the consequences of the pandemic. This is good news and we hope that this 2023 will just consolidate."*

The situation of agencies has improved, as evidenced by the figure of 87% of companies with financial stability: **55% claim to be the same or better financially than in 2019** (last pre-pandemic year) and **32% say that their financial situation is solid and stable, although they have not yet recovered 100% to the same levels as 2019.** Only 13% of respondents are still in an unstable financial situation and say that full recovery will occur if 2023 ends up being a normal season in terms of business. None claim to be in a complicated situation or at risk of closure.



In operational terms, the agencies show an even more positive business: 86% of the agencies surveyed have been able to reopen all their points of sale, have recovered 100% of their staff and/or are currently making new Contracts. 10% have also reopened all their points of sale, but they have had to reduce staff. Only 4% have had to close any of their points of sale and in turn reduce staff.

Forecasts for the 2023 season

For the most part, travel agencies (regardless of their specialty: TTOO, issuer, receptive or cruises) expect to continue growing throughout this year 2023 and do not foresee a serious impact of current inflation or recession forecasts that some economists point out. **60% of agencies expect travel bookings to grow this year between 5 and 15% compared to 2022.** Another 20% of respondents expect to match the results of 2022, and only 10% fear that bookings will fall compared to 2022 due to the economic situation. The remaining 10 per cent have not provided data.

Issuing sector: where Spaniards will travel

The issuing agencies and TTOO affirm in the survey that **the destinations most chosen this year by Spaniards for their holidays** and trips will be mainly international trips to European countries, Africa, the United States and again this year Asian countries. In this sense, respondents expect that the reopening of borders of some of the Asian countries such as Japan and China will cause a boom in the reviews for these markets. **The top 10 countries** for the trips of Spaniards will be, in this order, France, Italy, the **United States, Japan, Egypt, Kenya and Tanzania.**

In the **area of domestic destinations**, respondents also expect a notable demand to be maintained in the hiring of travel through agencies. In this sense, the **top 10 national destinations** for this year is (in this order): **Andalusia and Catalonia in first place**, the **Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands and also the getaways to urban destinations**, notably Madrid, **Barcelona, Valencia or Seville.**

Incoming sector: travellers visiting Spain

The agencies that receive travelers from other countries in our country explain that **France** and the **United Kingdom** will continue to be by far the main issuing markets for our country. **Germany** will also remain a key market for Spain, along with other European countries such as **Italy** and the **Benelux**. The two most significant growths within this list of main markets are the United States and, to a lesser extent, China. According to respondents, the **United States** will be one of the fastest growing countries this year, largely thanks to new air connections.



In the case of **China**, the lifting of restrictions is expected to translate into a normalization of demand that already marked an upward trend during the last years prior to the pandemic.

Communication of accommodation reservations and car rental

Since January 2, travel agencies, in application of Royal Decree 933/2021, of October 26, are obliged to communicate to the Ministry of Interior the data of the reservations of natural persons staying in Spanish accommodation or renting a motor vehicle in Spanish territory, something they previously had to make only accommodations. The regulation stipulates that they must be communicated within a period not exceeding 24 hours, which means that travel agencies may be forced to face significant personnel costs in order to manage these obligations.

The survey has included a question in this regard, and **20% of the agencies say that they have already had to hire staff reinforcements** to cope with the increase in bureaucracy. Another **27% say that they can afford to hire more staff to deal with these efforts and that this will take away available hours from their team to perform commercial work**. 53% of the agencies state that they have not yet been able to assess the impact of the measure adequately to position themselves in this regard, since the constant problems and technical errors of the platform have prevented it.

All the travel agencies consulted agree on the nonsense of the rule and the difficulties of its application, confirming, in the first days of application of the regulations, the chaos that ACAVe already foresaw that would occur.

ACAVe is working both at national and European level to try to exempt travel agencies from the obligation to communicate, considering that this obligation would correspond to the direct providers of the services, and in finally, to ensure that the data to be communicated are as minimal as possible, as well as that all questions relating to the application of the standard are clarified, which today remain pending response by the Ministry of the Interior, as well as many other issues related to data protection that could collide with European regulations.



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About ACAVe

The Corporate Association of Specialized Travel Agencies (ACAVe) is the association of state-wide travel agencies based in Catalonia. ACAVe is the most representative Association in Spain and includes 450 associates and around 1,000 points of sale throughout the country. The Association includes agencies of different types: holiday and corporate broadcasters, tour operators, coastal and city receptives, online agencies and cruise companies.

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