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## PRESS RELEASE

**ACAVE agencies foresee a decisive recovery in the demand for international travel by 2022**

- **The 2021 season closed with a notable improvement in activity, as 75% of the agencies surveyed recorded an annual increase in bookings of more than 25% compared to 2020.**
- **The arrival of Omicron put a brake on travel bookings for both the Christmas season and the start of the 2022 season.**
- **Saint Petersburg collaborates with ACAVe at FITUR to present travel agencies with the city's tourism scene in all areas, both for the individual sector and for more detailed and exclusive segments.**

**Madrid, Thursday, January 20th, 2022.- The Corporate Association of Specialized Travel Agencies (ACAVE),** the main employers' association in the sector in Spain and which represents the interests of Spanish travel agencies in ECTAA, the European employers' association of travel and tour agencies operators, participates one more year in FITUR, and today it has presented the results of a survey of the balance of the 2021 season and travel forecasts for 2022, carried out among the 450 agencies associated with ACAVe throughout Spain.

### **Balance of tourist season 2021**

It is confirmed that 2021 has been the year of the beginning of the recovery for Spanish travel agencies, although many companies in the sector are still immersed in a complicated situation. For 40% of those surveyed, **the volume of travel reservations in 2021** represented an increase of more than 50% compared to 2020, while for 35% of those consulted the growth has been between 25 and 50% . Less than 10% of those surveyed have indicated that they have not experienced any improvement compared to 2020.

**Martí Sarrate, president of ACAVe,** positively values these figures and points out that *"The activity of contracting trips has been improving as the year progressed and the results of the study show it. We are optimistic, but also cautious, because we are still far from the pre-pandemic values: the survey makes it clear that 95% of the agencies have not yet recovered the level of reserves of 2019".*



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Sarrate believes that the pandemic has made travel agencies the safest place to organize a vacation: *"the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and its consequences has caused many clients to turn to travel agencies as the safest platform for organizing of your vacation."* According to the results, most of the agencies surveyed consider that the factors most valued by their clients in 2021 have been -and will continue to be in 2022- **professional advice on the requirements and documentation necessary to travel to each destination; the guarantee of recovering the money in the event of border closures or quarantines; and flexibility in last minute changes.**

The clients of the agencies have also increased during this last year **the anticipation of contracting trips.** According to the results, 30% of reservations have been made between 3 and 4 months in advance, and 5% between 3 and 6 months before. 26% of customers have contracted their trips 1 month before their vacation. According to the president of ACAVE, *"these data show that the majority of Spaniards who have resorted to travel agencies sought to prepare their trips in time with the maximum guarantees."*

Regarding the **impact of the Omicron variant on reservations**, 39% of those surveyed have registered cancellations of trips planned for Christmas. Likewise, 52.2% of the total respondents have noticed a slowdown in the demand for new trips by 2022.

### **Forecasts for the 2022 season**

The results of the survey show an interesting change for 2022 in the contracting of vacations in travel agencies, since it is expected that the products most demanded by Spaniards in this new year will be mainly **international trips**. The five products that the agencies agree in pointing out as the preferred ones for 2022 are **Europe, the United States, African countries and safaris, destinations in South America and Asian countries.** This trend would demonstrate the recovery of the confidence of travelers to travel outside our borders. By countries, the most demanded are expected to be France, the United States, Egypt, Maldives, Costa Rica, Mexico (Caribbean) and the Dominican Republic.

In the field of **national destinations**, Spaniards who go to travel agencies to organize their holidays will prefer coastal destinations, mainly the Balearic and Canary Islands.



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In the field of **receptive agencies**, 85% of those surveyed agree that the most important source markets for Spain this year will continue to be France and Benelux. These markets will be followed in importance by the United Kingdom, Germany and the Nordic countries. 87.5% of the agencies also agree that **flexibility in booking conditions** will be the most decisive factor for the purchase decision, followed by **security and confidence in the application of Covid measures**.

### **Situation of travel agencies**

Asked **about their situation**, only 35% of travel agencies say that they have reopened 100% of their points of sale and have their entire team (without ERTE staff). For their part, another 35% of those surveyed have been able to reopen all their points of sale but have been forced to keep part of their employees in ERTE. Another 26% have opened only part of their offices and maintain staff in ERTE, and finally 4% have remained closed to this day.

Regarding **the implementation of telecommuting**, 26% of those surveyed affirm that their company has re-established 100% face-to-face work, while 39% have opted for a mixed model of office work and telecommuting. For their part, 35% of companies state that 100% of their employees telecommute.

### **Saint Petersburg brings offer and events to FITUR**

In order to reactivate tourism and travel to international destinations, ACAVe is collaborating and establishing strategic alliances with different destinations that have always had an important weight in Spanish travel, such as Saint Petersburg. The cultural capital of Russia returns this year with an important display to present its potential in the field of tourism. In particular, the activities related to the Champions League final that the city will host on Saturday, May 28, 2022 at the Krestovski Stadium, the same one where the 2018 FIFA World Cup matches were played.

The Russian city, represented by the Committee for the development of tourism in Saint Petersburg, has its own stand, 4C15, and will make two presentations called to be first-rate events. The first of them will be carried out by ACAVe, in a pioneering collaboration between the association and the tourist promotion authorities of the Russian city.

This event will offer the convened travel agents an exhaustive presentation of the city's tourism panorama in all areas, both that aimed at the individual sector,



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as well as more detailed and exclusive segments. On the other hand, the Honorable Ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of Spain and Andorra, Mr. Yuri Korchagin, the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Spain and the Petersburg Committee itself will offer a Cocktail on January 20 where they will give learn about different novelties that the city's tourist offer makes this year available to Spanish and Hispanic-American travellers. The Visit Saint Petersburg office in Spain offers information on this tourist destination throughout the year.

### **About ACAVe**

The Corporate Association of Specialized Travel Agencies (ACAVE) is the employers' association for 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 Spain. Agencies of different types are part of the Association: holiday and corporate broadcasters, tour operators, coastal and city receptive, online agencies and cruise companies.

### **Para más información:**

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