

# WTTC and Hotelbeds uncover Global Tourism Trends

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- *Global Travel & Tourism is soaring, and so are the Balearic Islands*
- *Palma continues to be a trend-setting destination*
- *Local contribution to the sector surpassed €1.5BN, a 128% jump versus 2021*

**Palma, Spain; 11 September 2023:** The World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTC](#)) partnered with [Hotelbeds](#) to bring sector leaders together in Palma, Mallorca, to delve into the ever-evolving dynamics of global Travel & Tourism.

Titled “Global Trends in the Tourism Sector”, the event provided a platform for attendees to gain valuable insights into the current state of Travel & Tourism through presentations and discussions led by Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO, and Hotelbeds’ CEO Nicolas Huss.

The event acknowledged the thriving tourism landscape, both on a global scale and within the Balearic Islands. In 2022, global Travel & Tourism experienced an extraordinary growth rate of 22%, primarily driven by the lifting of pandemic restrictions and a surge in spending by foreign visitors.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO, said: “Today, we witness a thriving Travel & Tourism sector, not just in the Balearics, but worldwide, with strong performance in Spain.

“Post pandemic leisure travel is booming. But travel patterns are changing. In the Balearics we are seeing a longer season. Luxury travel is particularly strong with hotels leading with new products for this market.

“Travellers want to travel more sustainably. Travel & Tourism can grow and protect the planet. Let us come together to shape a sustainable future for travel and tourism.”

During the event, held at the TravelTech Lab in Hotelbeds’ headquarters in Palma, Spain was recognised as a global leader in tourism, with the sector, contributing significantly to its economic landscape. Projections indicated that by the end of 2023, this sector will represent a remarkable 14.6% of Spain’s GDP and provide employment to nearly three million Spaniards, underscoring its crucial role in job creation.

Nicolas Huss, Hotelbeds CEO, said: “As we come to an end for the summer season, we should reflect and celebrate what the sector has achieved this year. The strong commitment of companies throughout the tourism ecosystem to work together with external partners, including those in the innovation sphere, will be critical to ensure Travel & Tourism continues to thrive.”

The CEOs also spotlighted the sector’s shift from corporate to leisure travel, with the latter currently accounting for a significant 88% of travel spending in Spain. This transformation is expected to continue, further strengthening the leisure travel segment.

## **Balearic Islands, an international tourism model**

Hotelbeds’ data shows that this summer the traditional flows of travellers have not only been

maintained but also increased, coming from the United Kingdom (+17%) and Germany (+29%) to the Balearic Islands. In addition, countries including France and Portugal have seen growing demand to the islands while long-haul markets out of Europe, such as the United States, are also growing.

### **Palma, a rising role in international travel**

Meanwhile, according to WTTC's latest Cities Economic Impact Research, Palma's Travel & Tourism contribution to the city's GDP saw an incredible 128% jump, to reach more than €1.5 billion, representing 6.3% of the local economy.

In terms of employment in Palma, last year the sector supported nearly 20,000 jobs, representing 6% of the local workforce, although this figure still trails 2019 by 11,000 jobs.

### **Tourism trends**

Hotelbeds predicts that three trends that will continue to define the traveller of the future, namely:

- Trips that combine leisure and business supported by the shift to remote working in recent years
- Sustainable travel, driven largely by Gen Z who are more conscious of their environmental footprint. Both companies are committed to this shift and have signed an agreement for Hotelbeds to join the WTTC's Sustainability Basics programme to raise awareness and encourage properties to be more environmentally friendly
- The rise of personalised travel; While people want to be able to book their trips at the click of a button, technology is being increasingly used to deliver tailored experiences, often supported by artificial intelligence

The breakfast event fostered an environment for local leaders to engage in thoughtful discussions about the future of Travel & Tourism. Attendees had the opportunity to gain insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the sector, setting the stage for continued collaboration and growth.

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### **World Travel & Tourism Council**

The World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTC](#)) is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism.

WTTC promotes sustainable growth for the Travel & Tourism sector, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, drive exports and generate prosperity. Council Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading private sector Travel & Tourism businesses.

Alongside our Council Members and board of Vice-Chairs, Op-Co and Executive Committee, from our Member organisations, our WTTC directors are responsible for guiding the work of the Council in the fulfilment of its mission. The WTTC Directors, based across the world, have expansive knowledge not only in their fields but also in Travel & Tourism as a sector and work with knowledgeable teams to bring the mission to life.

### **About Hotelbeds**

Hotelbeds are global leaders in the TravelTech space, connecting and empowering businesses by facilitating bridges in the ever-changing and expanding travel ecosystem. Our cloud-based technology platforms offer fast and simple access to a global network of travel products, from accommodation to ancillaries and payments, while rich data and intelligence helps to generate demand. By operating exclusively in the B2B arena, we are uniquely placed to drive growth for our partners without competing for the end customer. Our teams of 3000+

experts on the ground provide local expertise and support to boost trading even further, even in the most hard-to-reach spaces. Our unique blend of technology, data and passionate people serves as a catalyst for B2B travel players aiming to unlock their full potential.

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