

SPAIN AS A SAFE TOURISM DESTINATION

Following the recent outbreaks of the coronavirus pandemic in some specific regions in Spain, the Spanish authorities have adopted measures to control the outbreaks and reinforce Spain's position as a safe tourism destination.

The evolution of the pandemic varies dramatically from region to region but **the local and regional authorities are taking swift and forceful measures to deal with localised outbreaks**. Based on data from 17 August, around two out of three of all **new infections over the previous 14-day period were concentrated in four main Spanish regions** (Catalunya, Madrid, Aragón and the Basque Country).

There is full coordination between the national and regional governments in Spain to control and monitor the pandemic. On a national level, last Friday (14 August) Spain announced the closure of nightclubs, as well as further guidelines for restaurants and bars regarding opening hours and social distancing. Additionally, various Spanish regions have demonstrated extra measures. Some regions for example have committed to paying for the visitor's prolonged stay if they are forced to undertake a quarantine in Spain (such as in the Canary Islands and the region of Valencia) whilst others have established 'bridging accommodation' to isolate positive cases.

In terms of the outbreaks, according to our Ministry of Health, most of these have been detected from family gatherings, private parties, or in nightclubs with a large concentration of people; followed by outbreaks in a work setting. As such, these are settings which the visitor typically does not need to encounter.

It is worth highlighting that despite the infection rate, the rate of fatalities caused by the coronavirus in Spain is low: 54 in the last seven days (0.1 per 100,000 inhabitants), based on data published by the Spanish Ministry of Health on 17 August. This rate is similar or lower than the numbers recorded in other main European markets, according to data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

A similar trend occurs with hospital and intensive care admission which are well below the rates for April and May, which means that there is no pressure on Spain's healthcare system. Based on data provided on 17 August 2020, in the previous seven-day period, Spain had a total of 56 admissions to Intensive Care Units across the whole country.

The number of tests being carried out in Spain has increased exponentially with more than 100 PCRs for every 1,000 inhabitants meaning that aside from detecting an increasing number of positive cases (60% of which are asymptomatic), the testing level supports the control and management of the spread.

Tourism measures

We believe Spain continues to be a safe tourism destination, as long as the recommended safety and hygiene measures set out by the authorities are respected and followed. We are certainly not in the same position as we were in March; not by number of cases; or by the pressures put on our health care system.

Our tourism industry is thoroughly prepared to welcome tourism in a safe and hygienic way and our entire tourism industry has adapted its services to respond to the current situation.

The decision of the United Kingdom (our main source market) and other countries to impose a quarantine on travellers from Spain has undermined tourist confidence. Our authorities continue to work with the UK government and other EU member states so that actions are taken based on public health criteria and the location of these outbreaks; focusing specifically on the most impacted areas.

For more information on Spain as a travel destination, please visit www.spain.info