

The *Buy Catalonia* workshop will involve some 2,000 commercial interviews among the leading European tour operators and Catalan businesspersons

European tourism in Catalonia entails more than 6.5% of the Catalan GDP and effects an expenditure of 8,200 million euros a year.

Friday, 9 June 2006— The Barcelona International Convention Centre (CCIB) hosts today the *Buy Catalonia* macro workshop, the most important commercial and business activity of the year organised by *Turisme de Catalunya* and aimed at the Catalan tourist sector. Oriol Balaguer, the Catalan Secretary of Trade and Tourism, together with Ignasi de Delàs, the Head of *Turisme de Catalunya*, attended this morning's meeting, which gathered nearly 140 European tour operators ready to carry out more than 2,000 commercial contacts with professionals of the Catalan tourist sector.

Oriol Balaguer, the Secretary of Trade and Tourism, underlined the importance of this activity involving supply and demand ***“to project Catalunya forward”***. According to Balaguer ***“we favour quality and we want tour operators to know the work that is being done from Catalonia. We have a consolidated offer of 24 million tourists, but we're not obsessed with quantity, but rather with quality”***.

These innovative business meetings run by *Turisme de Catalunya* with the collaboration of its European network of Tourist Promotion Centres represents a unique opportunity for those Catalan businesspersons who already have within their grasp the possibility of selling their products to tour operators from 16 different countries: Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Poland, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, EIRE, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

The Importance of European Tourism in Catalonia: Some Figures

The European market is key to the generation of tourist activity in the greater part of the Catalan regions. Catalonia welcomes 24 million tourists every year. Half of this figure, i.e., some 12 million, are European tourists that generate more than 60% of

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total night stays (101.9 million) and make a global expenditure of approximately 8,200 million euros (70% of the total tourist expenditure).

The activity generated by foreign tourism in Catalonia represents:

- ⇒ 15% of the activity of rural tourism establishments;
- ⇒ 53% of the activity in camping sites;
- ⇒ 54% of the activity in hotel establishments;
- ⇒ 170,000 jobs;
- ⇒ more than 6.5% of the Catalan GDP;

Sorted by tourist *brands*, the activity generated by foreign tourism in Catalonia represents: 50.7% of all activity in the Maresme coastal area; 50.3% in the Costa Brava area; 42.6% in the Barcelona area; 35.5% in the Costa del Garraf area; 31.5% in the Costa Daurada area; 22.3% in the central Catalonia area; 15.9% in the Pyrenees area; and 9.1% in the Terres de l'Ebre area.

Buy Catalonia: An Innovative Commercial Action

Buy Catalonia is the combination of an educational journey – *Discover Catalonia*, an initiative that has led the European operators to get to know the territory, distributed into small groups segmented by products – and the *Business Catalonia* workshop, which is being held today at the Barcelona International Convention Centre. This action will be closed by *Leisure Catalonia*, an optional programme aimed at participating operators, consisting in the possibility of carrying out a number of complementary activities.

Prior to the celebration of today's macro workshop in Barcelona, *Turisme de Catalunya* carried out *Discover Catalonia*, a set of 12 simultaneous familiarisation trips in which the 140 operators grouped according to specialised products: Active, Cultural (Music and the Geniuses of Painting), Business, Family, Sports, Golf, Wellness, Gastronomy, Nautical, City Breaks, and Rural Tourism.

Foreign Tourism in Catalonia 2005

France	3,959,000
Germany	1,428,000
United Kingdom	2,329,000
Italy	1,086,000
Belgium and the Netherlands	1,497,000



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Switzerland	327,000
Nordic Countries	407,000
Russian Federation	146,000
United States and Japan	572,000
Other Countries	2,929,000
Total	14,680,000

Source: Catalan Directorate-General of Tourism and Catalan Institute of Statistics, from figures supplied by IET's Frontur.