



Madrid, 13 June 2024

At the 2nd Tourism Forum held by the city council, Almeida presented the pillars of the model that Madrid will implement to promote the sector's development over the coming years

## Madrid is betting on sustainable tourism development that's seasonally and geographically balanced, while being respectful of local residents

- Madrid's sustainable tourism management model will be based on three pillars: redefinition, redistribution and renewal, and it will be developed from an economic, social and environmental perspective
- Implementation of tourism intelligence analysis systems, actions to enhance the value of Usera as a tourist attraction, and calculation, reduction and offsetting of the carbon footprint associated with tourism are just some of the measures outlined in the strategic initiatives of the city's tourism policy for 2024 to 2027
- Maíllo underlined Madrid's great competitiveness and attractiveness as a tourism destination, and she stressed the importance of the sector on the economy, the high levels of satisfaction and perception of safety among visitors, as well as the city's strong position with respect to sustainability
- The forum included thematic panels which addressed highly topical subjects for the tourism industry, and the [2023 Tourism Report](#) was also presented

Madrid's mayor, José Luis Martínez-Almeida, presented the basic pillars of the Spanish capital's tourism strategy for the next four years at the 2nd Tourism Forum, which was held by the city's tourism department today at Hotel Meliá Castilla. The city council is betting on the balanced, sustainable development of the industry to continue to cement Madrid's status as a preferred international destination in a responsible manner, with controlled growth and in harmony with residents and the environment.

During his speech, the mayor underlined the "pride" Madrid feels with regard to its tourism sector, which "citizens know, value and appreciate" due to its importance, and which is "integral to the city's growth process". The sector is developing "in harmonious coexistence" with residents and has "made an extraordinary contribution to increasing their quality of life", fostering measures for "urban regeneration and improvement of the public space". Madrid is currently the world's

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third most popular city destination and, for the fifth year in a row, its top MICE destination. In recent years, the number of five-star hotels in the city has risen from six to 39.

To ensure that this new Madrid “isn’t just a passing fad” and that the model doesn’t “fail due to an inability to handle the success”, the mayor said the city’s tourism strategy for 2024 to 2027 would revolve around three main pillars: redefinition, renewal and redistribution.

According to Almeida, the sector will be redefined by bolstering Madrid’s strengths as the city with the best offerings in terms of “leisure, culture and sporting events”. Additionally, there will be “stepped-up joint actions by the city council and the private sector to foster long-haul tourism, improving connections with Barajas Airport”. An evaluation of tourism indicators, including factors such as “sustainability, innovation and digital transformation policies”, will be carried out to assess traveller experience and satisfaction.

The mayor of Madrid outlined how the renewal of the city’s tourism model would be based on “adapting to a changing world” in terms of events, offerings and expectations. This includes improvements made to infrastructure and exploration of new opportunities such as promoting the Spanish capital as a “health hub”.

Finally, Almeida emphasised that tourism would be redistributed “seasonally and geographically”, aiming to strengthen indicators for tourist traffic in the city during traditionally off-peak months like July and August. Additionally, efforts will promote “attractions in all of the districts which are worth visiting” beyond the city centre, such as Usera with its Chinese community’s regeneration project or the new offerings at El Capricho Park in Barajas.

### **Economic, social and environmental sustainability**

Sustainability in the destination of Madrid will be approached from three perspectives: economic, social and environmental. Economically, the aim will be to increase visitors’ length of stay and average spending, and to redistribute tourism to decongest hotspots. The objective is to promote events, boost meetings and film tourism, and to create digital transformation systems. To this end, a number of actions will be carried out such as the development of a new tourism website, the implementation of tourism intelligence analysis systems and the creation of high-value tourist offerings and a tourism product club which encompasses this segment.

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Socially, both control of tourism pressures and traveller satisfaction will be monitored, with a view to decentralisation and territorial cohesion, harmonious coexistence between citizens and responsible tourism, public-private partnership, development of the sector's talent and promotion of local products and artisan goods as a tourist attraction. Notably, initiatives in the district of Usera—a hub for Madrid's Chinese community—and the creation of a new tourist experience centre on Calle de Bailén will be coordinated to achieve these objectives.

Environmentally, the city will calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by tourism businesses and tourists. It will promote offsetting the CO<sub>2</sub> produced by major meetings as well as encouraging environmental certification for establishments through an agenda of actions to cut emissions and foster active mobility and sustainable events. These actions include calculating, reducing and offsetting the carbon footprint stemming from tourism-related activities of hospitality businesses and visitors; implementing competitive energy-efficient and renewable energy facilities and technology at Caja Mágica; refurbishing the palatial Vargas Mansion; improving sustainability and energy-efficiency in Casa de Campo Park; and launching awareness and information campaigns.

The city began the process of creating the strategic lines of its 2024-2027 tourism policy by holding various participatory meetings which were attended by a range of representatives from the city's main tourism-related subsectors: hotel accommodation, leisure and entertainment, gastronomy, culture, shopping and audiovisual, among others. The conclusions drawn defined the strategic lines and ensured inclusive, collaborative planning.

### **Madrid, a competitive and attractive destination**

Almudena Maíllo, the city's tourism councillor, opened the forum by providing a snapshot of tourism in Madrid during which she demonstrated the strong competitiveness and attractiveness of the destination. Madrid continues to establish itself as a benchmark in the industry, which accounts for 12% of the city's GDP and provides jobs for 444,533 people in the Spanish capital (according to data from the first quarter of 2024). Tourist spending in Madrid in 2023 totalled EUR 13.352 billion, with average daily expenditure of EUR 293 and a per-person average which has grown in every one of the city's top-ten long-haul inbound tourist markets. It has also positioned itself as one of the three most attractive destinations for hotel investment.

Maíllo underlined the Spanish capital's excellent position as a premier venue for major events, noting that the city is the "leading meetings and conference

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destination in Europe and the world and a benchmark for hosting major sporting events and musicals, which have a significant economic impact on the destination and give it greater visibility, as does Madrid's consolidation as a filming location and hub for audiovisual production". The councillor said that high-impact tourism had also gained ground in the city and stressed the importance of this segment, noting that "just 2% of Madrid's high-end hotels account for 29% of all tourist spending in the Spanish capital and generate 15% of the sector's jobs".

During her presentation, Maíllo mentioned factors such as Madrid's tourism pressure, which remains stable at 1.8 overnight stays per 100 inhabitants; the high levels of visitor satisfaction with the destination and their strong perception of its safety; and the city's commitment to supporting and promoting local goods and services. On an environmental level, she noted that Madrid is one of the best cities in the world to live in, ranking first among Europe's most sustainable cities, with a score of 77 out of 100. Maíllo also highlighted that seasonality has been reduced with a significant improvement during the summer months due to the growth of international tourism, and that Madrid is the fourth-greenest city in the world in terms of tree cover.

Finally, the councillor revealed data from a study conducted by the Tourism Department which compares Madrid to some of its main competitor destinations such as London, Paris, New York, Amsterdam and Rome. It identifies positive practices in these cities' models in terms of areas with room for improvement, strengths, and opportunities which could be implemented in Madrid. She finished her presentation by describing the overarching objective that the city council will work to achieve: "to make Madrid a benchmark for its sustainable destination management model, which is based on decentralisation and the integration of the local community and ensures the creation of wealth for the entire value chain as well as talent retention".

### **Thematic panels and the Tourism Report**

The 2nd Tourism Forum held by Madrid City Council included a number of panels and presentations on highly topical subjects for the sector such as sustainability, innovation, digitalisation and smart tourism. Renowned professionals and industry experts took part in the panels, including Natalia Bayona, Executive Director of UN Tourism; Mar de Miguel, Executive Vice-President of the Hotel Business Association of Madrid (AEHM); Bea Sajón, General Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean at Virtuoso; Emérito Martínez, Advisor Director at JAKALA; Federico J. González Tejera, CEO of the Radisson Hotel Group and Louvre Hotels; and Juan Cierco, Corporate Director of Iberia and Chairman of the CEOE Tourism Council.

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The [City of Madrid's 2023 Tourism Report](#) was also presented during the forum. Published by the tourism department, it provides information on indicators and tourist segments in the Spanish capital and details the actions carried out by the city council./

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