Consorci de Turisme de Barcelona - P-5890003-F

Destination Barcelona surpasses 1,000 companies with the Biosphere Tourism Sustainability Certification

- **487 companies from the city of Barcelona and 556 from the province have been recognized for their good practices in sustainable management**

- **The certified companies include iconic establishments such as Tibidabo, Librería Laie and La Mallorquina, centres such as the Escuela Superior de Relaciones Públicas and hotels such as Room Mate and Alimara**

- **Companies choose a responsible approach to water management in order to obtain certification**

- **This year has seen the highest number of companies achieving recognition for sustainable management**

BARCELONA FEBRUARY 16TH, 2024.- This morning, the new certifications were handed over within the framework of the Biosphere Sustainable Commitment, which recognises good practices in the sustainable management of tourism and service companies. More than 1,000 companies and organisations from the city and province have received the diploma with the seal that certifies the commitment to a respectful management with the environment, culture and social and economic return of the city.

A total of 1,043 companies and entities have been accredited with the Barcelona Biosphere Tourism Sustainability Commitment in Barcelona Destination, which includes the city and 12 counties of the province. The project, promoted by the Barcelona City Council, the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, the Barcelona Provincial Council and Barcelona Tourism, aims to promote tourism and the sustainability of the sector in line with the Sustainable Development

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Goals (SDGs) outlined in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. In other words, the commitment responds both to the desire of tour operators to promote more responsible tourism and to the desire of visitors to travel with as little impact on the environment as possible.

A total of **487 companies were certified**, with the highest percentage in the **accommodation** category **(46.9%),** followed by restaurants (9.9%), retail and MICE (9.4% each) and travel agencies (10.4%).

CERTIFIED ENTITY TYPOLOGIES 2023	Total
Sports Event	1
OIT	1
Conference Centres	4
Beaches	10
Transport	12
Guides	13
Museums	19
Experiences	22
Commerce	38
MICE	38
Restaurants	**40**
Travel Agencies	**42**
Others	58
Accommodation	**189**

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Barcelona, the European leader in certified sustainable accommodation

The Barcelona Destination, comprising the city and the 12 counties of the province, has the highest number of certified sustainable tourist accommodation establishments in the European Union (EU). This is reflected in the **Environmental Labels and Schemes** indicator created by the EU itself, which specifically indicates the number of accommodation establishments per destination that have managed to demonstrate sustainable practices and publicly recognise them with an international certificate.

Barcelona is also the only **destination** in the world to be certified **Biosphere Platinum**, thanks to its ongoing commitment to sustainability, as demonstrated by the fact that in 2011 the city became the first urban destination in the world to achieve Biosphere certification.

Certification & Drought

Biosphere certified companies commit to a minimum of three annual improvement actions, such as recycling grey water for irrigation of parks and gardens; installing water-efficient taps, showers and toilets; using infra-red activated automatic taps; implementing daily monitoring systems for energy and water consumption; using alternatives to natural turf; replacing cooling towers with closed-loop secondary systems; or adapting swimming pools with water recirculation systems.

Measures are also considered to ensure that the organisation maximises water savings in its facilities, calculates its consumption and informs its customers about water saving measures.

In this moment of drought emergency, it is possible to highlight some actions that have led to a reduction in water consumption. The **Alimara** Hotel, for example, has obtained the new Biosphere certification after replacing natural vegetation with artificial plants. **The Hilton** Diagonal Barcelona Hotel achieved this after introducing the use of salt water instead of chlorinated water in its swimming pools, a practice that makes them more sustainable in terms of water consumption, since salt water lasts longer and requires less refilling than traditional pools, as well as reducing the need for chemicals and maintenance. Also in the field of water management, one of the establishments that obtained certification this year is the **St Christopher's Inn Barcelona hostel**, thanks to the implementation of a system for the recovery and purification of grey water, mainly from showers and sinks, which is then reused for cleaning tasks and toilet cisterns. Also worth mentioning is the '4-minute challenge' initiative of the **Yurbban** hotels, which encourages customers to take a shower within that time. This data is important because every minute of showering is equivalent to the consumption of about 20 litres of water. The Yurbban therefore aims to achieve a consumption of 80 litres per shower, an amount that the initiative's managers consider to be more than sufficient to guarantee personal hygiene.

Restaurants and shops, the fastest growing

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Restaurants and **shops** are the fastest-growing businesses and institutions in the city of Barcelona in terms of Biosphere certification. The number of certified restaurants has doubled in two years and now stands at 40.

In this regard, Turisme de Barcelona has launched a project with VISA, in collaboration with the Restaurant Guild, to take a step forward in the certification of restaurants, thus responding to the challenge of sustainability, in line with the SDGs, and meeting the demands of those who visit Barcelona according to tourism quality parameters.

Among the 387 organisations renewing their certification, there are notable names such as **FC Barcelona,** the **Barcelona Convention Bureau** of Turisme de Barcelona, **Casa Vicens**, **La Llotja de Mar**, **DHUB** or the **Picasso Museum Foundation**. Among the 100 new companies joining the sustainability project are hotels such as Room Mate or Alimara, the bookshop Laie, the School of Public Relations, Tibidabo or La Mallorquina.

It is worth noting that in **Barcelona**, this certification does not cost the company anything, as it is fully subsidised by the IEET (Tourist Establishment Stay Tax), the same channel that will cover the cost of renewal in subsequent years if the required parameters are maintained.

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