

New ICCA ranking: Barcelona in the top 5 best MICE cities in terms of delegates and congresses organised

Turisme de Barcelona takes part in IMEX Frankfurt MICE trade fair with a new stand designed and built with 100% sustainable criteria

- **The new ICCA ranking, published today, places Barcelona in first place for the number of congress delegates and fourth in the world for international congresses.**
- **The Barcelona Convention Bureau (BCB) is present at one of the most important events in the MICE sector, with more than 80 meetings on the agenda.**
- **For the first time, the carbon footprint of the stand and the travel footprint of the staff and companies taking part will be calculated and offset.**

Barcelona, 23rd may 2023. - The **Barcelona Convention Bureau (BCB)** is in Frankfurt this week to take part in the IMEX trade fair for meetings, incentives and conventions (MICE) with its own stand, designed and built according to 100% sustainable criteria. As part of the Turisme de Barcelona programme, which specialises in promoting and attracting events, the BCB is attending IMEX with the sustainability story of the events and, for the first time, calculating and offsetting the carbon footprint of the stand's production and the travel of staff and participating members.

Today, at IMEX, the International Congress and Convention Association (**ICCA**) has published its ranking, in which Barcelona has once again broken the record as one of the best cities for organising congresses, both in terms of the number of delegates and the number of congresses. The Catalan capital takes first place in the ranking as the destination with the most delegates and remains in the top 5 as a MICE destination, in 4th

place after Vienna, Lisbon and Paris. According to the ranking, Barcelona is the first non-capital city of a state and the first in the whole of Spain to have organised the most congresses in 2022, accumulating more than 20 consecutive years in the top 5 for international congresses.

In terms of the number of delegates, Barcelona has maintained its number one position over the last decade 2013-2022, a fact that is in line with the views of the congress participants questioned in the last [Profile Survey](#), in which more than 60% of respondents said that the city chosen as the congress venue had a decisive influence on their decision to attend the congress.

After Barcelona, with 135,000 delegates, the ICCA rankings put **Vienna** (105,000) in second place in terms of delegates, followed by **Paris, Lisbon, Milan** and **London**. Madrid with 59,000 delegates is in 8th place.

Delegats		
1	Barcelona	135.000
2	Viena	105.000
3	París	101.000
4	Lisboa	87.562
5	Milà	77.969

Congressos		
1	Viena	162
2	Lisboa	144
3	París	134
4	Barcelona	133
5	Praga	129

In terms of the number of congresses organised, **Vienna** (162) is in first place, followed by **Lisbon** (144), Paris (134) and **Barcelona** (133), while Prague has moved up to take 5th place from Madrid, which has moved up to 6th place.

The President of the Executive Committee of Turisme de Barcelona, **Eduard Torres**, who congratulated the entire BCB team, has highlighted the strategic importance of congresses in terms of the return they bring to the city and its economic fabric, and has highlighted as very positive the commitment and specialisation that Barcelona is making in scientific and technological congresses. "The worldwide recognition of Barcelona as a congress destination puts us back on the map as one of the leading destinations in terms of organising events and also in terms of scientific and technological excellence, which makes us a very attractive city for the entire healthcare sector". For Torres, "this recognition confirms the success of the Barcelona model of public-private cooperation. The Barcelona brand is strong".

In this regard, the director of the BCB, **Christoph Tessmar**, wanted to underline the strength and positioning of Barcelona in the top 5, even in a year like 2022, when the first months are very affected by the Omicron variant and when other countries have fewer restrictions. "We are a resilient, professional and very attractive destination for MICE and these ICCA results prove it, especially with the first position, once again this year, in terms of number of delegates".

Barcelona has been in the top five since 2000. This, together with the fact that it is the only non-capital city in the top 10 of the ICCA ranking, confirms that the Catalan capital continues to be one of the preferred destinations for organising congresses and events.

This ranking only takes into account international congresses that rotate between three countries and have a minimum of 50 delegates. Important congresses such as the MWC and ISE are therefore not included.

IMEX, with our own 100% sustainable stand

IMEX Frankfurt, which runs from today until 25 May, is one of the must-attend events in the meetings and events industry, along with IBTM in Barcelona, attracting more than 10,000 delegates from over 150 countries and nearly 3,500 buyers each year to showcase the latest trends and changes in the MICE sector.

For the fifth time, the BCB will have its own stand at the event, along with the 12 companies that make up the consortium: Fira Barcelona and CCIB, Le Méridien Barcelona, SB Hotels, Grand Hotel Central, Renaissance Barcelona Fira, Setenta Group, Paxton Barcelona, Meliá Hotels International, La Daurada Group (Venue), Kuoni Tumlare Spain (DMC/OPC), 4foreverything, as well as Codornú and Família Torres as sponsors of the event.



Map 360º: <https://www.4foreverything.com/tour/BCB/index.html>

The BCB has more than 80 meetings scheduled with agents and operators in the MICE industry to attract, arrange and prepare future bids for new congresses and meetings in Barcelona, which already has more than 100 open bids until 2027.

This year's stand has been designed and built with a strong commitment to sustainability, using the following elements:

- PEFC-labelled wood from sustainable forests.
- Reduce material use by replacing signs with screens.
- Printed on PVC-free materials with non-toxic latex inks.
- Energy-saving LED lighting displays.

The stand, created by BCB member 4foreverything, will be certified through a post-audit by **Eventsost**, the international certification for sustainability in the events industry. In addition, for the first time, the carbon footprint of both the stand production and the travel of BCB staff and participating members will be calculated and offset. And to raise awareness within the industry, the footprint of buyers passing through the stand will also be measured.

The screens on the stand will display messages about the sustainable **production of the stand** and messages **about the footprint** generated by visitors, with tips on how to reduce it. To this end, a **carbon footprint calculator** has been created to measure the footprint of buyers and display the accumulated CO₂ (in real time). They will then receive a **guide** with recommendations on how to reduce the impact of their trip and be encouraged to offset their footprint.

New sustainable events guide and first Biosphere Convention Bureau

In 2021, Turisme de Barcelona signed the Glasgow Declaration as a supporting entity



and, as a signatory, has implemented a series of actions to support, encourage and train its members and stakeholders, with the aim of reducing the sector's carbon footprint. The BCB, as an area of Turisme de Barcelona that promotes the destination as a venue for congresses, meetings and incentives, aims to achieve sustainability in the business tourism sector through recognised best practices in social responsibility, energy efficiency, selective waste management and carbon offsetting.

With this in mind, the BCB is the first convention bureau to be certified with the Biosphere label, which means presenting itself to companies in the sector with a series of good practices and communicating sustainability in events. The trend

and objectives towards sustainability of events in the MICE sector are growing, as confirmed by the latest congress attendee profile survey, where 80% of congress attendees surveyed consider it very or fairly important that sustainability and social responsibility are taken into account in the organisation of the congress.

With the aim of making a leap forward in sustainability, the BCB has just published a good practice guide to inspire and guide the organisation of more sustainable events in the Barcelona destination. The [Barcelona sustainable events guide](#) is divided into different sections and is accompanied by a checklist to assess the degree to which events are sustainable and what needs to be done to further improve the results of the development of sustainable event management practices in the long term. The guide contains many examples of good practice in areas such as waste management, accessibility and social responsibility.

Barcelona, leader in the MICE sector with 450 congresses per year

Barcelona has consolidated its position as a leading MICE destination. It hosts around 450 congresses a year. Until 2023, 40 congresses with more than 1,000 delegates have already been confirmed, consolidating its position as the leading destination for the medical and scientific sector, which accounts for 40% of the events booked, followed by the technology sector, which includes major world-class events such as Mobile World Congress and ISE.

In addition to the congresses already confirmed, Turisme de Barcelona is working on 120 applications for the coming years. Most of these requests come from the medical-scientific and ICT (technology and telecommunications) sectors, as well as from the academic and industrial sectors.

The Turisme de Barcelona programme, **Barcelona Convention Bureau**, which has once again won the M&IT Award as the best international convention bureau, plans a very intense international promotional agenda each year in the form of trade fairs and workshops in the main issuing markets such as Spain, Germany, the USA, France and the United Kingdom. Each year, the BCB submits between 60 and 80 bids to host congresses and participates in various networking missions and trade visits to promote and boost the sector.

In the second half of 2023, Barcelona will host for the first time congresses such as the International Public Transport Union (4-7 June), which was won during the pandemic, the World Parkinson's Congress (4-6 July), and others such as the Smart City Expo (7-9 November) and the European Congress on Neuropsychopharmacology (5-7 October), not forgetting IBTM (November), the annual benchmark event for the MICE sector. The repetition of these congresses demonstrates the confidence that the various associations have in Barcelona as a destination, as well as in the BCB and the professional sector, when it comes to organising this kind of meeting.