

# Meetings tourism in Barcelona grows by 5% during 2011

- The number of professional meetings held in the Catalan capital increased by 6.8% compared to 2010, and participant numbers rose 5%.
- Airy Garrigosa, the historic director of Barcelona Convention Bureau, is retiring and handing over to Christoph Tessmar

**Barcelona, March 6, 2012.** – Meetings-related tourism in Barcelona grew again for the second consecutive year in 2011, following an upward trend that began in 2010. According to Turisme de Barcelona data made public today during the annual assembly of their meetings tourism programme, Barcelona Convention Bureau (BCB), the number of professional meetings held last year in the Catalan capital increased 6.8% compared to the previous year's results. Following the same upward trend is the number of delegates who came to meetings in Barcelona, which rose 5% compared to 2010. In 2011, the city played host to a total of 2,283 meetings and 647,693 participants, with 80% of these foreigners.

Unlike 2010, when conventions and incentives showed the strongest growth, in 2011 the increase in the number of meetings is thanks mainly to the pull of one of its sub segments, that of workshops and courses, which increased 67.3% on the previous year. Another fact that highlights the importance of this micro sector is delegate numbers which stood at 64,612, almost 50% up on the previous year.

	Congresses	Seminars and symposiums	Corporate meetings	Total	%
National	25.438	26.444	66.514	118.396	18,3
International	265.869	37.308	221.676	524.853	81,0
n.a.	0	860	3.584	4.444	0,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>291.307</b>	<b>64.612</b>	<b>291.774</b>	<b>647.693</b>	<b>100,0</b>

a) Number of meetings	2008	2009	2010	2011		11/10 (%)
				Nº	%	
Congresses	383	294	310	255	11,2	-17,7
Seminars and Symposiums	286	215	226	378	16,6	+67,3
Corporate meetings/incentives	1.813	1.348	1.602	1.650	72,2	+3,0
<b>Total number meetings</b>	<b>2.482</b>	<b>1.857</b>	<b>2.138</b>	<b>2.283</b>	100,0	<b>+6,8</b>

b) Number of delegates	2008	2009	2010	2011		11/10 (%)
				Nº	%	
Congresses	340.527	342.801	302.561	291.307	45,0	-3,7
Seminars and Symposiums	43.234	38.943	43.120	64.612	10,0	+49,8
Corporate meetings/incentives	312.141	194.413	271.152	291.774	45,0	+7,6
<b>Total number of delegates</b>	<b>695.902</b>	<b>576.157</b>	<b>616.833</b>	<b>647.693</b>	100,0	<b>+5,0</b>

Source: Barcelona Convention Bureau (Turisme de Barcelona)

In addition, other tourism sectors, such as hotels, have directly benefited from this increase in numbers. Meetings held in 2011 (congresses, workshops and courses, conventions and incentives) generated 2,523,937 overnight stays for the Catalan capital, a 2.6% rise over the previous year.

### **Christoph Tessmar, new director of Barcelona Convention Bureau**

During the event, which was held at Barcelona's Centre of Contemporary Culture (CCCB) and brought together about 200 professionals, the tourism consortium announced a change of director for Barcelona Convention Bureau and the name of the person who would now take up this responsibility. Airy Garrigosa, the programme's historic director, who has managed it since its creation in 1983, is retiring and this post will now be taken up by German Christoph Tessmar, an expert in the organization and coordination of national and international conferences for large companies such as Sanofi-Aventis and Boehringer Mannheim Spain.

The meeting, inaugurated by the Second Deputy Mayor, Sònia Recasens, was attended by the president of Turisme de Barcelona's Executive Board, Joan Gaspart, and included a discussion panel on the *past, present and future of congresses and trade fairs*, chaired by Turisme de Barcelona's Managing Director, Pere Duran, and the participation of the Director of Business Expansion at the Fira de Barcelona, Pere Camprubí, and the Executive Vice President of MCI Geneva Jurriaen Sleijster, and the President of New Marketing Challenges INTL New York, Michel Couturier, and the Director of congresses in Spain for Viajes Iberia Congressos, Andre Vietor .