

# ECONOMY

## BUSINESS AREA 1



### Tourism



The word **Spain** is a synonym of **tourism**. Our country, with a population of **46 million**, is the second most visited worldwide, with over **82 million** tourists in 2017! These numbers continue to grow, both in arrivals from other countries as well as in turnover and national GDP contribution.

Murcia is a small region but its size is no obstacle when it comes to tourist arrivals: over **5.2 million** yearly. Over the last few years, Murcia has focused on diversifying its tourist portfolio, which now includes options in sun and beach, mountain, golf and water sports, natural parks, gastronomy, health centers, congresses, as well as wine, cultural and religious destinations. In the last decade, the regional tourist activity increased **17%**, with more Spaniards and foreigners visiting the region and international tourism increasing 2 percentage points above the national average (4.9%).

Although a total of **52.9%** of international tourists in the region come from the UK, since 2008 other thriving markets have increased their share, namely Nordic Countries (+12.9%), France (+2.2%), Ireland (+10.1%), Belgium (+9.6%), Italy (+23.6%) and Russia (+5.5%).

The regional government, aware that there is still much to be done within the tourist sector, has not only contributed to diversifying the origin of tourists, but also created a portfolio to show investors the most interesting business opportunities within this industry.

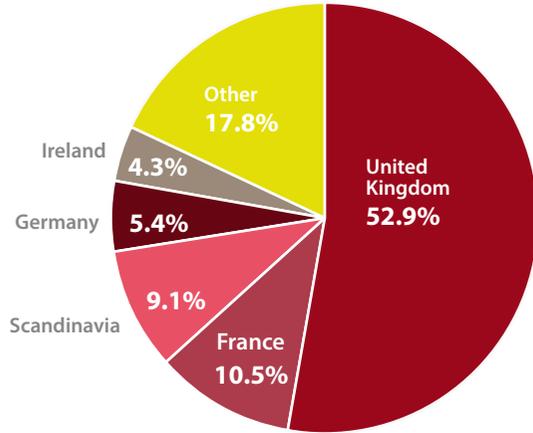
As a whole, tourist activities provide **direct employment to 48,725** workers in the region, 55,000 when indirect jobs are considered. Direct tourist employment contributes **9.6%** to the Region's total (11.2% if indirect jobs are added), with an **increase of nearly 2%** in the last six years. In 2017, the tourist sector generated nearly 3,000 new jobs, totaling nearly 50,000 direct jobs in the sector (6% more than in 2016). The target is to reach 55,000 direct jobs in the tourism industry by the year 2019.

Tourism plays a key role in the socioeconomic structure of Murcia. Regional tourist activities generated some **€2.8 billion** in 2016, contributing about 10% of Murcia's GDP. This strength of the tourist sector has led to the creation of an important network of product and service suppliers which last year had a turnover of **€557 million, 2% of the regional GDP**.

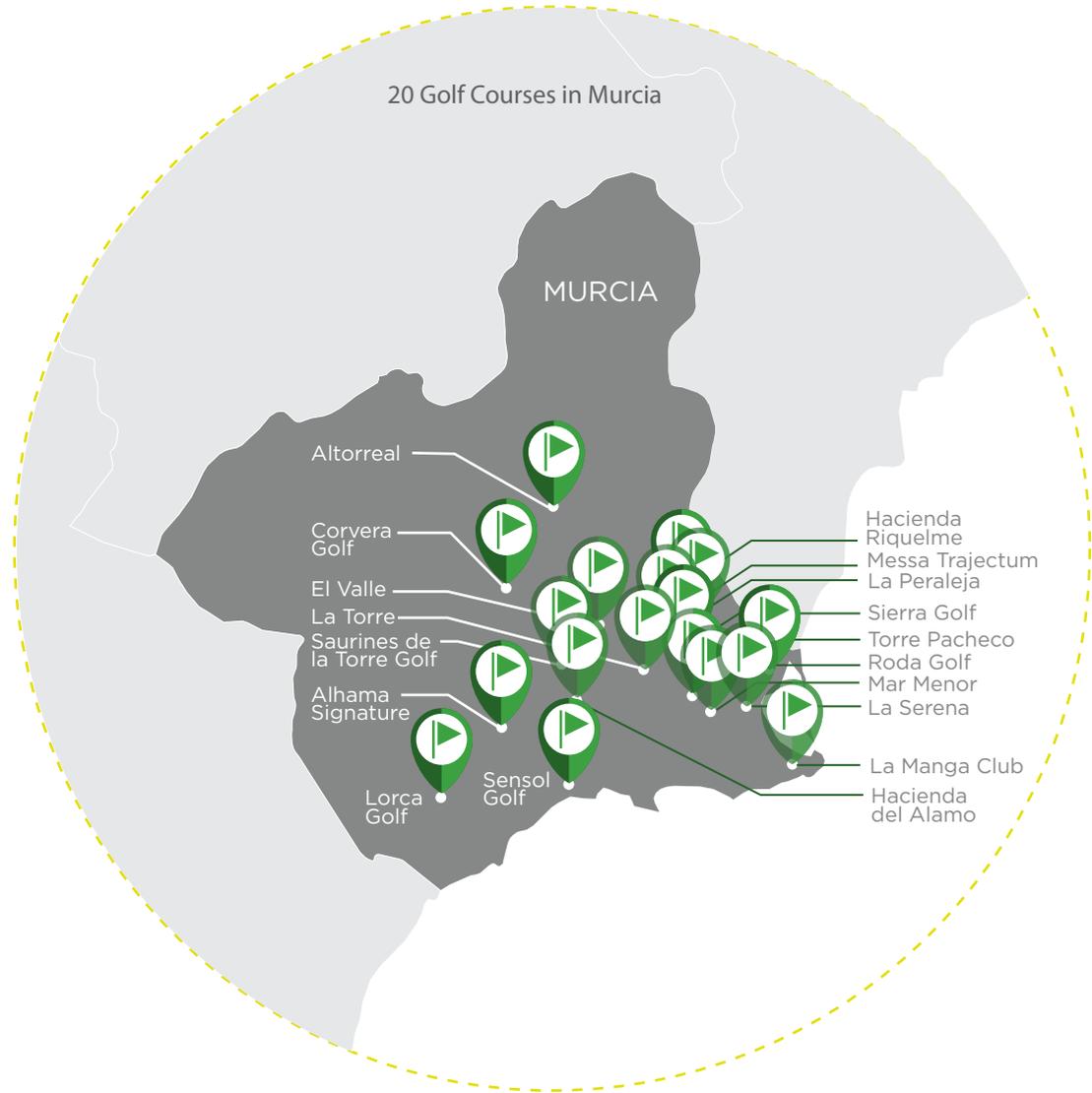
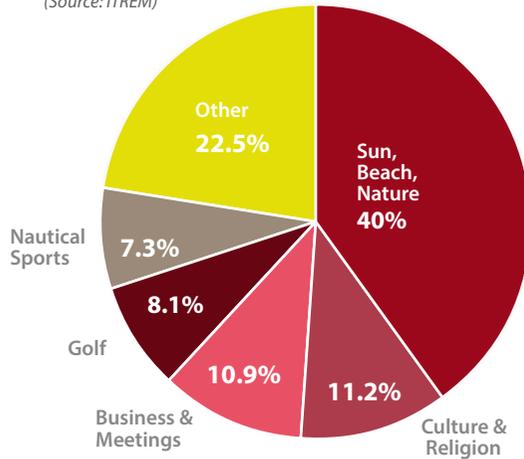
Spain last year surpassed the United States to become the world's second most visited country after France, with over **82 million** tourists!

*-Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy (01.11.18)*

Country of Origin of Foreign Tourists (2016)



Principal Tourist Areas Based on Money Spent (Source: ITREM)



**COMPANY HIGHLIGHTS:**

Main investors are **Phoenix**, the Chilean group owning one of the two 5-star hotels in the region (the other is **La Manga Club**) as well as groups **Silken** and **Tryp**, owners of iconic hotels in Murcia. A recent investor in the region is the group **Roc Hotels**,

which has paid **€22 million** to purchase and remodel the **Hotel Doblemar**, in La Manga. In total, sectoral investment is calculated at **€560 million** last year, a figure expected to increase in the short term due to the excellent prospects of the industry.

A key contributor to those prospects is golf tourism. The region, due to its great weather, attracts golf players throughout the year to its 20 high-quality courses all located within 50k of each other and designed by big names including *Jack Nicklaus, Dave Thomas and Seve Ballesteros*.