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August 2019

ETOA update: Barcelona

Dear Colleagues,

You may have seen reports related to levels of street crime in Barcelona in recent days, or seen related advisories (See links below).

Client safety is of paramount importance, and we have been in close contact with our partners in the city to understand the situation, and what measures are being taken to assure visitor safety. As there are various public bodies involved we are informed that a co-ordinated response to our inquiries will not be forthcoming until next week. For a tourism city especially this is slow progress, and we will be working with them on how to optimise coordination and communication flow so that, in future, relevant information and reassurance is provided as soon as possible.

ETOA has a country representative based in Barcelona, and good relationships with city, province and region, and we are confident that progress will be made. Barcelona responded fully following a rise in reported pickpocketing of tourists in the past, and they are fully aware of the significance of public perception of safety on intention to travel and future sales. As was Paris following similar concerns: the city deployed more police and improved the process of reporting a crime, a necessary step for insurance as well as justice. Poor reporting processes worsen the harm caused through lost time which could have been spent enjoying the destination, and provide insufficient deterrence if it is felt that visitors will not go to the trouble of reporting crime.

We will push for improvements in all aspects. Meanwhile, usual precautions for a crowded city remain advisable: care taken when using cash machines; use of zipped bags worn across the body; particular attention on public transport and in spaces popular with tourists.

If you have any information you would like to share with us so that our dialogue with the authorities is as useful as possible, please email policy@etoa.org.

Resources

- [US Embassy and & Consulate in Spain and Andorra – Security Alert](#)
- [BBC News: Barcelona crime wave tarnishes boom in tourism](#)

- [El Pais: Inseguridad en Barcelona](#)
 - [El Mundo: Inseguridad en Barcelona: "Se ha dejado crecer"](#)
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