

European Benchmarking Study 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT DETAILS

Funded by: Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA)
Commissioned to: TNS Travel & Tourism

Methodology

Research method: Interviews with tourism representatives in Manchester and Barcelona

Objectives

- To provide comparable facts on the size and value of the tourism industries in Greater Manchester and Barcelona.
- To provide an overview of the tourism infrastructure in Barcelona in comparison with Greater Manchester - the organisational structures, its role within the national context, the funding and responsibilities and information on the tourism product.
- To identify the strategic approach in Barcelona, with examples of best practice wherever possible which could be applied in Manchester.
- To identify reliable ways to measure the performance of the tourism industry in Manchester vis-à-vis Barcelona over time.

KEY FINDINGS

- Similarities between Manchester and Barcelona include: the number of visitors, size of the airport, the importance of business tourism, and the appeal of the cities as cultural and shopping destinations.
- While the Olympic Games were a major catalyst for the development of Barcelona as a tourism destination, the Commonwealth Games provided an important focus for a programme of regeneration and development which had already commenced within Manchester.
- While the majority of tourists visiting Barcelona are from overseas, Manchester remains reliant on a strong level of demand from the UK market.
- Both cities are enjoying increased demand from visitors with considerable growth in business through the respective airports and significant expansion plans.

- Both cities have identified an ongoing programme of events and festivals as a means of maintaining the profile of the cities and providing the stimulus for visitors to consider choosing the destination for visits in the future.
- At the city level, there would appear to be close similarities in the structural arrangements for the promotion and development of the two cities as tourism destinations - the interaction of a tourist board for the city which is a partnership of public and commercial sector interests and a local authority with responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the city infrastructure.

