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Cuba projects to reach five million visitors in 2018

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Cuba hopes to reach the figure of five million foreign visitors for the first time in 2018, an increase of 6.4 percent compared to the plan of this year, ratified Manuel Marrero, Minister of Tourism.

Before the deputies of the Commission of Attention to Services of the Cuban Parliament, which is meeting at the Havana Conventions Center, Marrero said that an increase in tourists-days is expected, as well as the revenues of the sector.

He stressed that despite the decrease in the arrival of vacationers due to the passage of Hurricane Irma, at the end of November the country reported four million 257 thousand 754 visitors, with an increase of 19, 7 percent compared to the same period of 2016.

We hope that the second fortnight of December is better, he said, while reaffirming that the Mintur does not give up to meet its goal of receiving four million 700 thousand travelers this year.

He reiterated that Canada is the main source of tourists to Cuba, while there is a growth of US visitors, who came under the 12 categories of travel authorized by

the White House, which since November 8 were drastically restricted by President Donald Trump.

The traditional markets that report the largest amount of tourists are France, Italy, Russia, Spain, Argentina and Brazil, which have already surpassed their historical record figures.

Regarding cruising activity, Marrero said that it grew 230 percent, and that this favorable behavior is expected to continue, while new requests for air operations are reported for the current high season (November-April).

He assured that there is an improvement in the indicators related to quality, and that the main dissatisfactions of the visitors are related to road signs, currency exchange and the hygiene of the cities, aspects in which they work.

With regard to the link with the non-state sector, he specified that there are currently 24,217 rooms in private homes, spaces that are gaining more acceptance among those who arrive in this Caribbean destination.

According to the Minister, travel agencies have contracts with 2,585 self-employed workers in activities such as housing leases, gastronomy and transportation.

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