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AUSTRALIAN LEADERS PROGRAMME



Fundación Consejo
España Australia



www.spain-australia.org



“Australia, strategically speaking, is very important for Spain”

MADRID > 07.11.2016

The Spain Australia Council Foundation’s Secretary General Alonso Dezcallar welcomed the 2016 Leaders and gave an overview of the programme

The two main goals of the Spain Australia Council Foundation’s II Leaders Programme, which started with an official welcome from SACF’s Secretary General Alonso Dezcallar, are to offer a comprehensive, updated view of Spain and to improve the two countries’ images of one another.

The four Australian journalists participating in this edition will visit a range of places in Spain to discover some of the country’s key companies with interests in

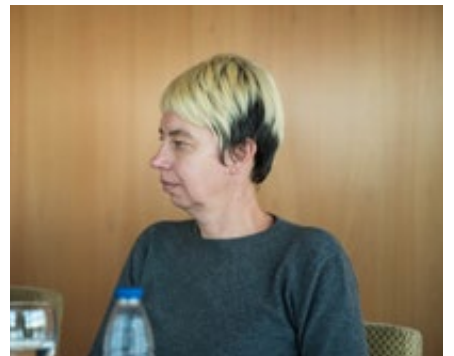
the Asia-Pacific region, as well as some of the most salient aspects of Spanish art, culture and gastronomy. They will also have a chance to exchange opinions and forge links with influential peers, public figures and think tanks.

As stated by the Secretary General during his address, in the past few years Spanish companies have been highly active in Australia, and it is necessary to foster political relations so that they grow accordingly. He emphasised the interest shown in Australia by the members of the Board

and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation explaining that “strategically speaking, it is very important for Spain”.

Alonso Dezcallar also mentioned the similarities between the two countries, which facilitate the coordination of joint actions.

All the attendees agreed that, with the exception of a few stereotypes, Spain and Australia know very little about one another. Alonso Dezcallar felt confident it would become clear that Spain “is an efficient, competitive country. By the end of the programme you will have built an image of Spain, which I trust will be positive and will help you, in turn, to create a positive image of the country in Australia”.
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Indra's solid footprint in Australia and Asia-Pacific

The Australian Leaders 2016 discovered Indra's technological development and its activity in Australia

MADRID > 07.11.2016

Íñigo de Palacio, Indra's Global Director for Institutional Relations, summarised the company's footprint in Australia as follows: "Australia has been and will continue to be an important market for us".

As he explained to the Australian Leaders, Indra currently has a strong presence in the country. From its Sydney headquarters and offices in Newcastle, it manages not only its activity in Australia but in the whole region, and one of its most recent projects is the roll-out of a new surveillance system in the South Pacific area.

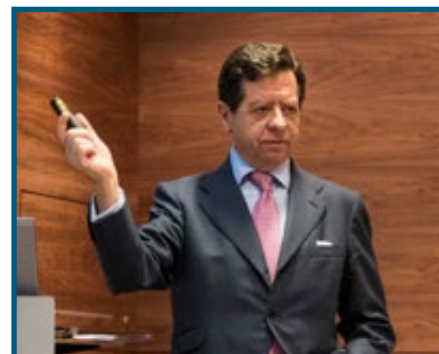
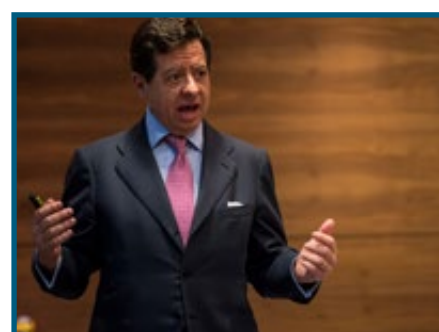
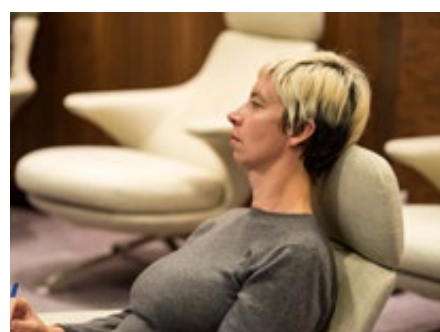
Australia is becoming an increasingly important market for Indra; Africa and Asia-Pacific currently represent 12% of its business.

Íñigo de Palacio gave the Leaders an insight into the company's mission. Indra undertakes projects in over 140 countries worldwide and in all sectors linked to the digital transformation and new technologies, including transport, traffic management, public administrations, healthcare systems, energy, industry, defence and financial services.

The Leaders were particularly interested in border control and illegal immigration and the use of drones to control people flows and illegal trafficking. Like Europe, Australia has received many economic and political refugees, and the management of this problem has given rise to major controversy among different political and economic sectors in the country.

Indra started operating in Australia in 1992 under a contract with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and currently has 100 employees. The company's interests in the Australian market are focused around transport (railway, air and maritime control systems, automatic ticketing, etc.), defence, air control and energy. One of its most noteworthy projects in the country is the update to Sydney's rail CCTV system.

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Lunch at Navantia



The FCEA's Chairman welcomed the Leaders and the Foundation's patrons to analyse business relations between Spain and Australia and the current economic and political situation

MADRID > 07.11.2016

The Chairman of Navantia and of the Spain Australia Council Foundation, José Manuel Revuelta, welcomed the Australian Leaders, together with some FCEA Board members, to a lunch meeting which was also attended by the Ambassador of Australia to Spain, Virginia Greville.

Mr Revuelta summarised Navantia's activity in Australia, whose Army is already one of its main clients. The company has already built over 15 ships, including the Adelaide and Canberra helicopter landing ships, and is currently working on

other projects: logistics support vessels, support and supply contracts and feasibility studies. Navantia's intense activity in Australia has led the company to open offices in the country's main cities, most recently in Canberra.

The international outlook and Spanish-Australian relations were also discussed later in the meeting. Brexit was considered to be a highly relevant issue by the two countries given the opportunities for Spain stemming from the fact that countries like Australia will be looking for an alternative to the UK as a strategic partner to access the EU market.

The journalists that make up the group of Leaders were particularly interested in hearing about the advantages and obstacles encountered by Spanish companies when investing in Australia. Despite stumbling blocks such as labour costs and the excessive amount of procedures and reports required, Spanish companies agree that Australia is very open to foreign companies, that it values skill over nationality and that it makes it easier for companies to enter its market than other countries do, including English-speaking ones.

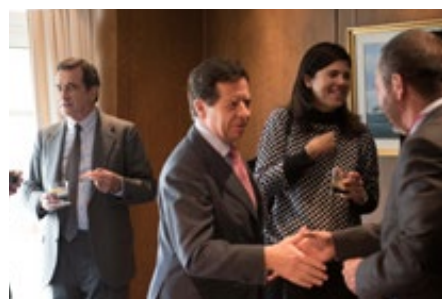
The fact that English is the official language in Australia, unlike other countries in Asia, and its position as a gateway to the Pacific and New Zealand markets were also deemed positive factors by the patrons.

Many of the stereotypes about Spain were discussed during the lunch, and the need for initiatives such as the Leaders Programme to encourage better knowledge of the country became apparent. It was concluded at the meeting that certain factors, such as the leadership of Spanish companies in sectors like high-speed rail, air traffic control and renewable energy, speak for themselves, and that it is important for international experts to come and see what Spain is really like.

As well as José Manuel Revuelta, Navantia was also represented by its Head of Business, Gonzalo Mateo, and Navantia Australia executives Francisco Barón and Warren King. The lunch was also attended by Director General of North America and Asia-Pacific Affairs Fidel Sendagorta and Sub-director General of International Economic Relations Álvaro Rodríguez on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. María Aparici, Secretary General of Trade Policy with Europe and Asia-Pacific represented the Ministry of Economy and Trade.

The Foundation's Board was represented by Joaquín Mollinedo, Head of Institutional Relations at ACCIONA; Ramón María Moreno, Director General of Casa Asia; Íñigo de Palacio, Head of Institutional Relations at Indra and Eduardo Sánchez Moreno, Head of Analysis and Strategy at Instituto Cervantes.

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An analysis of foreign and security policy in Spain and Europe

The journalists visited Elcano Royal Institute and attended a discussion on the Spanish and European economic and political landscapes

MADRID > 07.11.2016

Despite the geographical distance between them, Australia and the European Union have strong cultural, economic, security and human rights-related ties. The importance of their trade relations is clearly reflected by the free trade agreement they are currently negotiating. Areas such as security, the fight against terrorism, innovation, migration and development will be addressed from 2017 onwards at the Leadership Forum, which will be taking place annually in the two countries.

Most of those issues – particularly the management of the Spanish crisis, the departure of the UK from the European Union, migration flows and the threat of terrorism in the EU -- were discussed at the meeting

held by the journalists on the Australian Leaders Programme 2016 at Elcano Royal Institute, a think tank for international and strategic studies which analyses the world from a Spanish, European and global perspective.

The participants were welcomed at the Elcano Royal Institute headquarters by analysts Mario Esteban, Carmen González, Miguel Otero and Carola García-Calvo, who offered an overview of the Spanish and European political and economic situation over the past few years. They began by analysing the development of the economic crisis and its impact on the Spanish labour market. Spain's high unemployment rate can be explained partly by the influence of underground economy, the seasonality of the agriculture and tourism

Reception at the Australian Embassy

The Ambassador of Australia to Spain, Virginia Greville, hosted a dinner party at her residence for the Australian Leaders during which they discussed the goals of the programme as well as current affairs with an impact on the two countries. Appointed Ambassador of Australia to Spain in May 2015, Virginia Greville has extensive experience at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and was the former Ambassador to Chile.

Spain and Australia began diplomatic relations in 1967 and they have, according to their respective governments,

a growing friendship with strong trade and investment links (including through SACF's patrons) as well as cultural and scientific ties through the presence of Instituto Cervantes in Sydney and CSIC and CDTI's agreements with Australian institutions and companies. The two countries also have bilateral agreements such as the Work and Holiday scheme, which allows young Spanish and Australian travellers to spend a period of time in the other country.



sectors and the high number of short-term contracts.

The general feeling of dissatisfaction generated by the crisis and its management by Spain's traditional political parties gave rise to new parties, whose ideology, skills and impact on Spanish politics grabbed the attention of the Australian journalists. Despite its structural economic problems, the analysts at Elcano Royal Institute stated that the Spanish economy is expected to match its pre-crisis GDP next year.

Immigration
The evolution of immigration in Spain also caught the Leaders' attention. Although immigration figures have been in negative territory in recent years and began to fall as of 2012, the country took in seven million immigrants until then over a short period of time, and according to Elcano Royal Institute experts, it is remarkable that it managed to do so without any serious conflict. The main reasons behind this were, according to the experts, the weakness of Spanish identity, the country's Francoist past, which curbs the rise of right-wing parties, and the fact that the crisis was attributed to corruption and not to immigrants, as it was in other European countries.

Terrorism

The meeting also discussed the threat of Jihadist terrorism. Spain is not among the hardest-hit countries and the number of arrests in connection with terrorist activities is similar to the figure in Australia, well below countries such as France, Germany and the UK. The Leaders paid particular attention to the profile of detainees, similar to the rest of Europe, and the importance of social media in their activities, which is low according to analysts.

Brexit

Spain's outlook on Brexit was one of the main issues discussed at the meeting. The UK's decision to leave the European Union caught the country by surprise and is being followed with great interest due both to economic interests and to the number of British nationals living in Spain. Although Spain has close ties with the UK, it will align itself with its European peers, including France and Germany, whatever the conditions for the UK's departure. As emphasised by the Foundation's Secretary General Alonso Dezcallar, the EU is still popular in Spain because "for a long time it embodied exactly what the country wished to achieve: democracy and a welfare state."





The present and future of the spanish economy

The Leaders met with the Secretary of State for Trade, Jaime García-Legaz

MADRID > 08.11.2016

The Leaders were offered an accurate overview of the performance of the Spanish and European economies at a meeting with Secretary of State for Trade Jaime García-Legaz.

Measures to stop the crisis

The Australian visitors were particularly interested in the history of the economic crisis in Spain and Europe and the measures adopted to tackle it. The Secretary emphasised the Spanish banking sector reform and its outcome, reflected by the stress tests that demonstrated the resilience of Spanish banks, which is not necessarily paralleled in other European countries.

Jaime García-Legaz emphasised a further consequence of the economic crisis and Spain's inability to devalue its currency: the containment of salaries and prices, which has increased the productivity and competitiveness of Spanish companies. At present, Spain is the second largest exporter in the EU, with exports accounting for 35% of GDP. Additionally, it has also been the most competitive country in the OECD in the past few years and has increased exports to countries it was

are actually not as all-important for the Spanish economy as might be expected, despite the fact that the country is among the top three world tourist destinations year after year.

Forecasts

As for future forecasts, the Leaders showed an interest in new technologies and renewable energies. Laurel Papworth inquired about the sharing economy in Spain and "buy local" movements, which are highly popular in Australia. Jaime García-Legaz explained that these are starting to take off, especially in urban areas. He also emphasised the importance of new technologies, which have given rise to the creation of a Digital Agenda, a key component of the new government's strategy.



Giles Parkinson wanted to know about the Spanish energy sector. The Secretary of State emphasised the outstanding level of Spanish engineering over recent decades, which is clearly reflected by the weight of hydro-electric power in Spain. He mentioned that the river Duero is considered to be the world's best-harnessed river in this regard. As for renewable energies, Spain is currently a world leader, with a range of companies carrying out major projects worldwide.

Conclusions

The overview given to the Australian Leaders at the Ministry of Economy was, on the whole, a positive one: the economic recovery is entrenched in Spain and the figures are promising, though it still needs to pare back its deficit, among other indicators. It currently boasts a growing economy, thanks to the measures adopted. "This has been a matter of courage for Spaniards," Jaime García-Legaz stated.

#LideresAustralianos

barely able to reach in the past: China, Japan, Korea, Morocco and Algeria, to name but a few.

Exports

When asked about the country's top exporting sectors, Jaime García-Legaz mentioned the automotive industry, pharma, refined oils and, of course, fashion, with Inditex and Mango ranking among the top global players. In the field of agriculture, Spain is the world's top producer of olive oil and wine and the largest exporter of olive oil. The Leaders were particularly impressed by the tourism figures, which





Airbus and Australia: an advantageous long-term relationship

The Leaders got to see how RAAF-commissioned aircraft are manufactured

MADRID > 08.11.2016

Airbus Group, one of Europe's top aviation companies, has an Australian division dedicated to the manufacturing and maintenance of aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force and the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

As part of the programme's agenda, the Leaders visited Airbus's headquarters

in Getafe, Madrid, where around 6,000 employees work on the development and manufacturing of civil and military aircraft. There they had the chance to become familiar with the transformation process of civil Airbus A330-200 aircraft into military Airbus A330-MRTT, the most modern tanker aircraft to date.

The Royal Australian Air Force placed its first order in 2004 and since then a strong

long-term relationship with Airbus has been built, including the commissioning of two new aircraft in 2015. The relationship is so close that, as explained by Antonio Moya, head of the A330 MRTT programme, a delegate of RAAF is permanently based in Madrid to work with Airbus on the project requirements.

Airbus tankers are compatible with air forces from other countries due to the



standardisation process known as STANAG (Standardisation Agreement), under which NATO members' air forces can use the facilities and equipment of other countries. Despite not being a member, Australia became a major non-NATO ally (MNNA) in 1989, so Australian aircraft deployed in conflict zones can supply fuel both to other air forces and to British and American air forces.

During the visit to Airbus hangars, the Australian Leaders saw all the phases of transformation of civil aircraft into military aircraft. The aircraft, built in France with components from several European countries including Spain, are modified internally with the structural and military reinforcements needed for them to be fully operative.

The final result is similar in appearance to a commercial aircraft, except for the additional instruments in the cockpit to carry out refuelling manoeuvres, which include 3D cameras. Another advantage of Airbus A330 MRTTs is that they can be used

for other purposes, such as transport and even transformation into a medevac aircraft.

The Leaders got a close-up view of the different refuelling systems, probes and drogues, and heard about the research programmes devoted to automating the process as much as possible. Airbus has currently completed production of those aircraft, each of which employs an average of 200 people daily for a whole year, until 2020.

Founded in the late 60s, Airbus is a world leader in aircraft manufacturing and its military division is an industry beacon.

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Meeting with journalists from various spanish media outlets

The participants in the Australian Leaders programme talked about the press and the current situation in the two countries with Spanish colleagues

MADRID > 08.11.2016

The Council Foundation arranged a meeting for the Australian Leaders with their Spanish counterparts. The main goal was to exchange opinions on topics they consider relevant to the profession and the current situation in the two countries, as well as forging professional ties.

The attendees at this work lunch were journalists Alicia González (El País), Ángel Nieto (La Razón), Juan Tato (Radio Nacional de España), Fernando García (La Vanguardia), the former editor of El Mundo, David Jiménez, Pablo Colomer (an expert in foreign policy) and Asia-Pacific expert Georgina Higuera.



The state of the press in the two countries was the first topic discussed, and the attendees agreed that Australian and Spanish media outlets are in a similar position, experiencing grave difficulties and seeking a profitable business model.

In Spain, media outlets have suffered the sharpest drop in employment levels after the construction sector, which has had a negative impact on content quality, the journalists explained. In their opinion, the main reason for this has been a loss of trust in traditional media, which have been ousted by new digital media which

connect better with audiences. The meeting also looked at the impact of social media and user interaction.

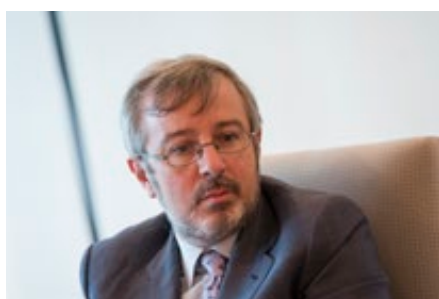
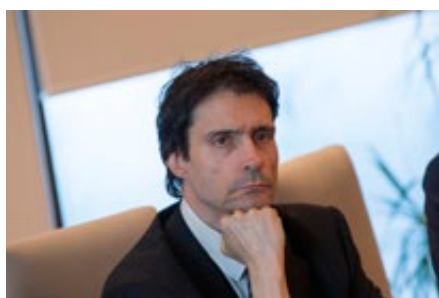
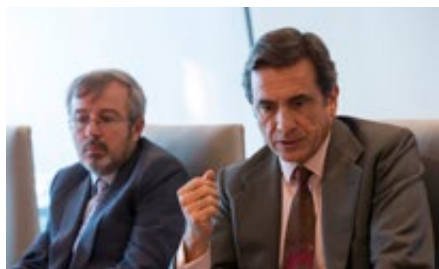
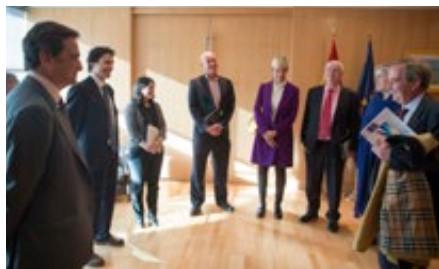
The economic crisis in Spain was a main talking point over lunch. The Australian journalists shared their impressions with their Spanish colleagues after the meetings organised as part of the programme. The Spanish journalists explained that, although the crisis seems to be over and unemployment has dropped, the recovery is still underway. "Spain is learning to re-position itself after the crisis," they said. The Australian Leaders said they believed Spain has reason to move forward with

optimism and considered education to be one of the key pillars for optimal economic performance.

The attendees at the meeting said the event was enriching and interesting, and it offered the Australian Leaders a clearer insight into Spanish society.

#LideresAustralianos





“We must become attractive to Australia”

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Director General of North America and Asia-Pacific met with the Leaders at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation



MADRID > 08.11.2016

The 2016 Leaders met at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Ignacio Ybáñez, and the Director General for North America and Asia-Pacific, Fidel Sendagorta, with whom they analysed Spanish- Australian relations and Australia's ties with the EU.

Ignacio Ybáñez opened the meeting by highlighting the areas of interest shared by the Spain and Australia at the UN Security Council, as well as international maritime security and cyber-security, as examples of potential areas for multilateral cooperation.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs also emphasised the UK's departure from the EU as one more reason to tighten bilateral relations. Spain, he said, has significant interest in Australia – this is demonstrated every time registration opens for Work and Holiday visas – and it is important to work towards making this interest mutual. Likewise, it is crucial to intensify Spain's presence at an institutional level, even though there have been more Spaniards visiting Australia than vice versa.

When the Leaders asked about the reasons for these asymmetrical relations between Spain and Australia, Fidel Sendagorta explained that there are many Spanish companies with businesses and interests in Australia, but very few Australian companies investing in Spain.

He also emphasised student exchange

programmes as a way to improve Spanish visibility in Australia. “We must become attractive to Australia, as Australia has been attractive to Spain for years,” he said.

The Leaders showed great interest in finding out how Spanish foreign policy works in relation to the European Union. Ignacio Ybáñez explained that the two complement each other, as Spain participates in the EU decision-making process. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that Spain is committed to the European project and that being a member is positive for the country, both politically and economically.

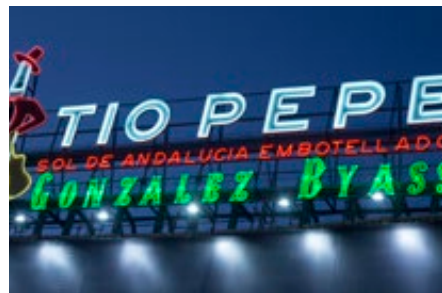
During the meeting, the participants discussed current affairs such as the Paris agreements, which Spain has been unable to ratify until now due to the lack of a working government, as well as Spain's energy policy, its relations with neighbouring countries and the impact of international politics on the US elections.

#LideresAustralianos





Madrid showcases its tourist attractions for the Australian Leaders



A guided tour familiarised the participants with some of the city's most iconic sites

MADRID > 08.11.2016

According to data provided by the Embassy of Australia, over 200,000 Australian tourists visit Spain every year. They are among the millions of visitors who make Spain one of the world's top tourist destinations year after year. Despite the geographical distance working against them, Australian tourists are potentially highly attractive targets for the Spanish market, as they do not need a visa to travel and have considerable purchasing power.

Tourism as the cornerstone of Spain's economy and the country's appeal as a tourist destination was yet another topic included in the 2016 Australian Leaders programme, which featured visits to the most iconic sites in its host cities. During the part of the programme held in Madrid there was a guided bus and walking tour of the city. The Leaders enjoyed landmark sights such as Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor, Cibeles and Plaza de Oriente.

Madrid's cultural, culinary and retail offering makes it one of Spain's top tourist destinations. According to data put out by the Department for Employment, Tourism and Culture, nine million people visited the city in 2015, of whom over half were foreigners. Although most are European (mainly French, Italian and British), the number of Asian visitors (Chinese, Japanese and Korean) has been growing materially over the past few years. Madrid is also a national leader in terms of average expenditure per visitor, at over 1,200 euros.

#LideresAustralianos





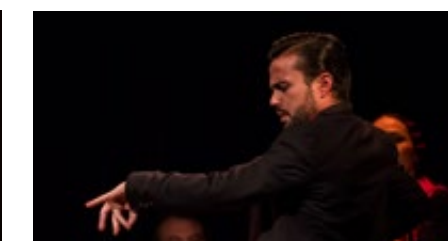
A cultural and gastronomic event at Casa Patas

A dinner with typical fare and a flamenco show completed the programme's first leg in Madrid

MADRID > 08.11.2016

Casa Patas, an iconic tavern/flamenco venue, combines folklore and gastronomy, two of the things foreign visitors to Spain love best. The venue is considered a flamenco landmark.

#LideresAustralianos



The Leaders visit Inditex, the world's top fashion manufacturer and retailer

Inditex has 17 stores in Australia and is highly successful in the country

ZARAGOZA > 09.11.2016

Inditex started operating in Australia five years ago and now has 17 stores in the country. At the end of 2015 it opened its first online store - a Zara Home - in the Southern Hemisphere. These facts all underscore the message conveyed by Jorge Savirón, from Inditex's department of systems and automation, who talked about the group's success and profitability in Australia.

The journalists of the Leaders Programme visited the company's logistics hub in Zaragoza and had the chance to see one of the world's largest fashion retailers at work. This hub is the second one built by the company and the first to incorporate automation systems.

Jorge Savirón explained during the visit that Europe remains Inditex's main market but the company is expanding, especially into Asia (mainly China and Russia) and, to a lesser extent, the US.

Inditex's logistics hub in Zaragoza ships



Zara garments to 2,000 stores in the Northern Hemisphere. Items for the Southern Hemisphere are shipped from other hubs, as the seasons are not the same.

During the visit to the warehouse, which has a surface area of 260,000 sqm, the Leaders were able to observe the logistics management technology in place. 1,400 employees work in 24-hour shift patterns using a complex RFID system. The centre holds over 14 million items and this system allows them to be located in record time, with a margin for error of under 0.1%.

This versatility is largely due to the features of the group's stores, which are located in high real estate value areas. Inditex's logistics system allows them to devote more space to exhibiting the items and less to storing them.

Over 110 trucks carry merchandise to the hub every day, and just as many leave it with cargo ready for distribution. A total of 70% of the input at the warehouse comes from suppliers in neighbouring countries (mainly the EU and Morocco), and the rest comes from markets further

afield, such as Asia. The company's success was also addressed during the visit. Since its humble origins in North-West Spain in 1963, the group has become the world's largest fashion manufacturer and retailer, with over 7,000 stores, more than 150,000 employees and total revenues of 20.9 billion euros in 2015.

#LideresAustralianos



Spain's high-speed trains: a model to follow

The improvement of railway transport is a top infrastructure priority in Australia

ZARAGOZA > 09.11.2016

High-speed railway transport is a topic of particular interest in Australia: in April, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull reactivated an infrastructure plan which aims to link the country's largest cities, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne, by rail.

The Rail Infrastructure Forum took place on September 8 in Sydney, and gave representatives of the Spanish and Australian industry the chance to discuss the opportunities and challenges posed by rail transport.

During their trip from Madrid to Zaragoza, the participants in the Leaders Programme got to visit the cockpit of the high-speed train linking the two cities. Renfe's Head of International Projects, José Antonio García, accompanied the Leaders during the visit and explained the workings of Spanish high-speed trains, which are among the world's most modern.

The Leaders showed particular interest in track occupation and wildlife protection (special tunnels for animals, for example), as well as falling object detectors for bridges, tunnels and other sensitive places. They also learned about rail security systems, which are approved under the EU's ERMTS system. Renfe's high-speed trains (AVE) started operating in 1992 between Madrid and Seville. There are now routes linking Spain from north to south, as well as from Madrid to Catalonia and Valencia.





Acciona is considered to be a model for clean energy development in Australia

Acciona's position as a global leader in renewable energies

NAVARRA > 09.11.2016

ACCIONA is a global wind power leader. The Vedadillo Experimental Area in Navarra is one of the hubs used by the company to test the efficiency of its turbines and towers, and the Leaders got to see them in operation on site. Although it was created for research purposes, Vedadillo generates a significant amount of energy (around 27 GW a year), enough to power 7,000 households.

These control centres send information about their turbines to CECOER (Renewable Energy Control Centre), which was the next stop on the Leaders' itinerary. This is the world's largest control centre, monitoring 7,000 wind generators from 258 wind farms worldwide (including in Australia). The Centre was recently the focus of a feature by Australian network ABC News. As pioneers in the roll-out and development of wind power, ACCIONA and Spain as a whole are seen

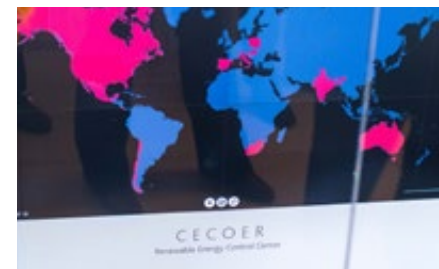
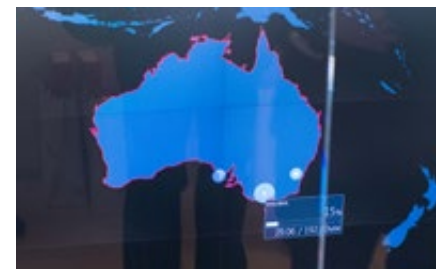
in Australia as a model for renewable energy implementation.

As an expert in renewable energies, Giles Parkinson was particularly interested in this leg of the tour. The Leaders were offered information about the implementation in Australia of technologies developed in Spain, the difference in the cost of wind farms in the two countries and the protocols in place for ACCIONA's control centres to be able

to monitor other areas in the event of technical problems.

ACCIONA is the world's largest company completely devoted to clean energies. Its activity is mainly focused around wind power, although it also develops photovoltaic, solar thermal, hydroelectric and biomass projects worldwide. Among all of these sources, it produces enough to power six million households.

ACCIONA's footprint in Australia dates back to 2002. Since then, it has invested over 650 million Australian dollars and its business scope spans wind power (with three wind farms and a fourth set to become operative in Victoria in 2018) and infrastructure (its Toowoomba highway project has received several awards), as well as water treatment and desalination.

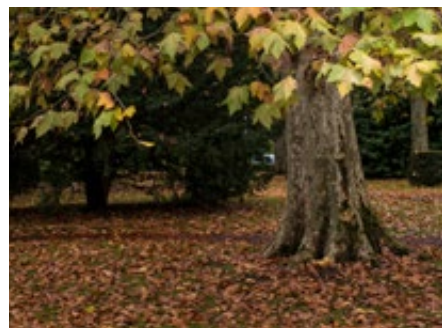




Australia is fascinated by the Camino de Santiago



Australia is among the countries with the largest number of pilgrims and figures are increasing every year



PAMPLONA > 10.11.2016

Before leaving for San Sebastián, the Leaders took a guided tour of the starting point for the stretch of the Camino that begins in Pamplona. The route to Santiago de Compostela is yet another great tourist attraction in Spain, and the number of pilgrims is constantly increasing: between January and October this year, the Camino registered more pilgrims than in 2015 as a whole, and over 54% were foreigners from 168 different countries. The number of pilgrims who

made it to Compostela in 2015 stood at over 262,000 people.

The tour started at the famous bridge of La Magdalena, which dates back to the 12th century, at the height of the Camino's popularity. The guide told the Leaders about the history of this iconic pilgrimage route for Catholics and its links to Pamplona over the centuries. The Leaders also visited two of the hostels where pilgrims spend the night, as well as other landmarks such as the city walls, the cathedral,

the church of San Saturnino and the City Hall, which is the starting point for San Fermín, a festival which is highly popular among Australian travellers.

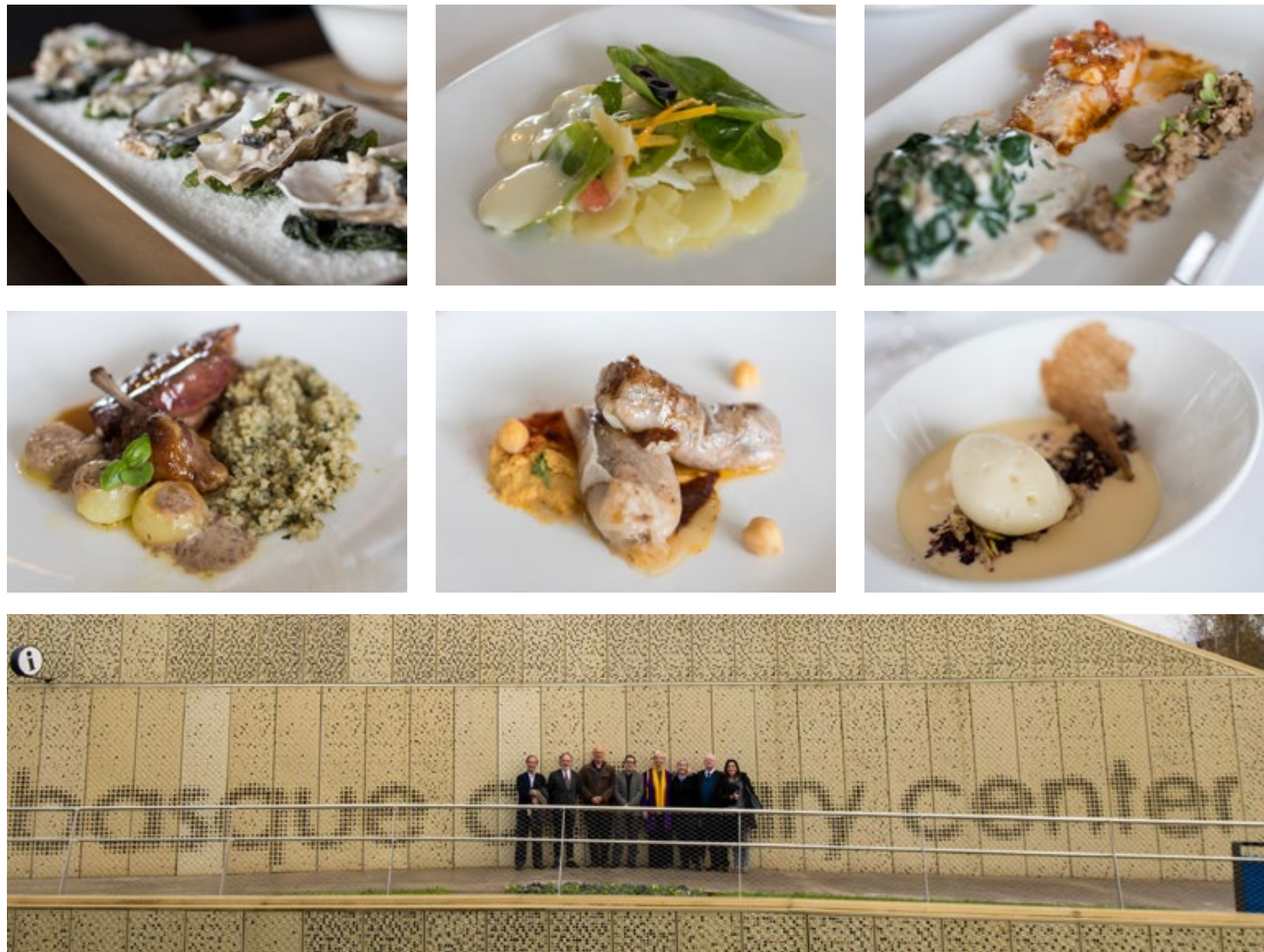
The Camino is extremely popular among Australian tourists. Australians are among the top 10 nationalities visiting the route; almost 4,000 Australians walked the Camino in 2015. In 2011, the Regional Government of Galicia decided to step up its promotion efforts in Australia, given that the number of pilgrims from Down Under

had trebled over the preceding seven years. As a result, the number of visitors has increased by 800% since 2004.

The undeniable appeal of the Camino and other European pilgrimages has even inspired the creation of the "Aussie Camino" between Portland and Penola, in the south of Australia.

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The Basque Culinary Center: avant-garde gastronomy

The centre is a global benchmark for training, research and promotion

SAN SEBASTIÁN > 10.11.2016

Joxe Mari Aizega, Managing Director of the Basque Culinary Center, welcomed the Leaders to this world-class academic institution, home to some of the best Basque chefs, leading companies in the food sector, a technology centre specialising in marine and food innovation (AZTI) and Mondragon Unibertsitatea.

Since its creation in 2011, the BCC has been striving to become a global benchmark for training, research, innovation and promotion of gastronomy and nutrition. It has workshops, an auditorium, a research centre and experimental workshops used by gastronomy lovers and hospitality professionals studying for professional postgraduate programmes and the official university degree in Gastronomy.

For its Managing Director, the Basque Culinary Center's main virtue is the ecosystem that has been created in the past five years, comprising its Gastronomy Science Faculty as well as a research centre and various events and promotions. According to Joxe Mari Aizega, the Basque Culinary Center "connects gastronomy with culture, science and health".

Its versatile nature is what makes it absolutely unique. It was created thanks to the efforts of several renowned Basque chefs such as Juan Mari Arzak, Pedro Subijana and Martín Berasategui, who insisted on the creation of a new centre. San Sebastián was the right place for its headquarters given its strong gastronomic history and the number of renowned chefs in the city.

Over 560 international students pursue degrees and postgraduate courses at the centre. Demand is high, and generally only one in four applications is successful, based on criteria such as languages spoken, academic record, skills and motivation. There are also workshops and summer courses for food lovers and Australians are among its biggest fans, surpassed in number only by Spanish, French and Japanese students.

What sets BCC apart from other renowned institutions is its innovation and research centre, which carries out studies on healthy living, sensorial analysis, preservation and additives, hospitality and catering equipment either alone or jointly with international companies, with a view to promoting entrepreneurship and the creation of new gastronomy and agri-food companies.

The Leaders, together with their hosts, analysed the phenomenon of gastronomy, which is hugely popular at present among all social strata and generates a great deal of interest. An example of this success are TV shows such as MasterChef and MasterChef Junior; the Basque Culinary Center takes part in the Spanish editions of these shows. Laurel Papworth, an expert in social media, has worked managing large online communities including



one of the English-speaking editions of MasterChef.

The tour also included the kitchens and workshops, where BCC students design end-to-end restaurant projects, from the original idea and the menus to the décor and the website. After that, the Leaders tasted Basque Culinary Center specialties, comprised of modern interpretations of typical Basque dishes featuring sea-

food, meat, innovative recipes and bold ingredients. In short, a perfect sample of the avant-garde work undertaken in the Center's classrooms which made sure the Leaders' visit to San Sebastian was nothing short of mouth-watering.

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Spain: at the forefront of european research with Tecnalia

Tecnalia works with the Australian Energy Research Institute developing offshore wind farms

SAN SEBASTIÁN > 10.11.2016

Tecnalia is Spain's top applied research and technological development centre and one of the main centres of its kind in Europe. Founded in 2010 by eight companies, Tecnalia currently has 1,400 employees and a client portfolio of over 4,000 companies for which it designs, identifies and develops technological solutions in areas such as sustainable construction, energy and environment, software, industry and transport, health-care and technology services.

Tecnalia's clients and partners are all over the world, including Australia, where the company works with the Australian Energy Research Institute on the development of electric transmission systems for offshore wind farms.

During the visit, the Leaders saw some of the research projects carried out by Tecnalia in various sectors, such as curved photovoltaic panels to adapt to all sorts of surfaces and new models of semi-submersible platforms for offshore wind power generators.

Healthcare

In the healthcare sector, the Leaders

became familiar with a range of projects applied especially to the field of rehabilitation for degenerative conditions. Electrical stimulation devices and an intracranial system to track brain cell activity, which in turn causes an exoskeleton to move, are just a few of the company's most avant-garde projects.

Robotics

Lastly, the Australian journalists got to see the latest breakthroughs in robotics, such as the Hiro project, which aims to help robots and humans work better together, and autonomous industrial vehicles that are equipped to operate in hazardous environments such as nuclear power stations.

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Visit to the national transplant organisation

Spain beat its own record of transplant patients in 2015. Its management model has been recommended by the WHO and is currently being implemented in other countries

MADRID > 11.11.2016

The National Transplant Organisation (ONT) took part in a seminar organised by the Instituto Cervantes-Spain-Australia Council Foundation Fellowship in Australia, where it explained the success of its management model. Australia has been advised by this organisation and has seen its donor rate improve over the past few years. The figures for 2016 are at 18.1 donors per million; whilst this is still low, there are prospects for future growth.

The last visit organised for the 2016 Leaders Programme took its participants to the organisation's headquarters in Madrid, which coordinates the efforts of all the Spanish healthcare systems in the field of organ donation.

Doctor Beatriz Domínguez-Gil, a special

ist in nephrology, showed the Australian Leaders the working of this organisation, which falls under the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. For the past 25 years, its work has positioned Spain as a leader and a model for organ donations and transplants. After its creation, Spain went from 14 donors per million to almost 40 donors per million, the world's highest ratio. In 2015, Spain beat its own record in transplant patients.

The system responsible for this success is based, according to Doctor Domínguez-Gil, on several core factors, the first of which is early detection of potential donors. The most important aspect, however, is providing hospital staff with training on how to communicate with families and support them in critical situations. Just 10% of the seminars organised by the ONT for hospital staff are linked to techni-

cal and medical aspects; the rest focuses on learning how to provide information and support to families. The Leaders, who found this interesting, also asked about other aspects such as the impact of religion on the donation rate.

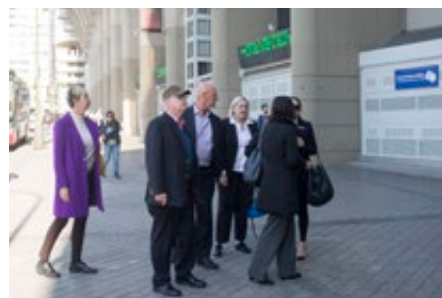
The Leaders were also particular interested in the ONT's complete availability to the media, as well as in the expenditure that organ transplants represent for public healthcare systems. According to Dr Beatriz Domínguez-Gil, "with the savings that kidney transplants entail in dialysis treatments alone, the system saves more than the cost of organ donations and transplants."

These figures have led the WHO to recommend the "Spanish model" and are the reason it is being implemented in various countries worldwide. The UK, Croatia,

Iran and China are already enjoying great results. Dr Domínguez-Gil highlighted Latin America, where the ONT is currently working with several countries that are trying to adapt the programme to their own social and economic landscapes. The results achieved to date in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Colombia have also been excellent.

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Successful edition of the Australian Leaders Programme

The participants expressed their gratitude for the opportunity afforded to them at the closing lunch

country's general context instead of focusing on a specific sector. Giles Parkinson said inviting four journalists with such different backgrounds was "very ambitious" and recognised the Foundation's success in that regard.

Paul Kelly considered the Leaders programme to be "an extremely enriching experience." The seasoned journalist from The Australian was impressed by the programme's variety and enjoyed receiving insights into a more modern Spain in fields such as technology and renewable energies. He also stated that it would be interesting to carry out similar activities in Australia.

The Foundation's Secretary General Alonso Dezcallar thanked the four journalists for taking part in the programme and especially for participating so actively. The ultimate goal, he said, was to show them a picture of the real Spain, and as Laurel Papworth said, the Foundation achieved just that: "To me, Spain was nothing but a tourist destination. I now feel closer to the country." Alonso Dezcallar said he was delighted to have helped address "the lack of mutual knowledge which means that Spain and Australia do not consider each other top-level options."

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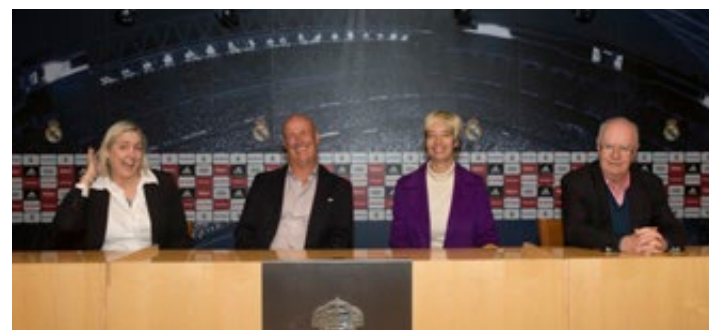
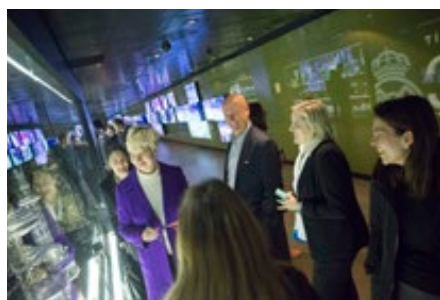
Although Australia's national team is not among the sport's powerhouses, football is popular there nonetheless. Spanish teams such as Atlético de Madrid, Villarreal and Real Madrid have taken part in tournaments and done pre-season tours in Australia. Real Madrid also manages a sports school through its Foundation in New South Wales, and some of its students recently visited Madrid to meet the team's players.

Thanks to its global fame, Real Madrid's stadium was the venue chosen for the last activity in the programme, which consisted of a guided tour around the pitch, the locker rooms and the benches, as well as the trophy hall and an interactive room

displaying the club's most memorable moments.

The agenda finished with lunch at the restaurant Puerta 57, during which the participants discussed and evaluated the programme together with the Foundation's Secretary General, Alonso Dezcallar. The Australian journalists emphasised the quality of the programme put together by the Spain-Australia Council Foundation and the professionalism of everyone they met throughout the week.

Some of the Leaders, especially Giles Parkinson, admitted to having been rather sceptical initially due to how broad the programme seemed to be. However, after the first meetings they understood the importance of becoming familiar with the



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